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AN  
APPENDIX  
TO  
*Delaune's Plea:*

OR,  
A New DISPUTE  
Which lately happen'd in the City  
of *BETHEL*, between  
*Adam Gojim & Ben Kahal,*  
ABOUT  
**Matters of Religion.**

Being a just Vindication of the People of  
God, who are commonly stigmatiz'd  
with the Name of *Schismatics*.

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Now Publish'd for the Common Good,  
By *E N O S H M O P H E T.*

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*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye  
separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the un-  
clean thing, and I will receive you, 2 Cor. 6. 17.*

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Printed for the Author, and sold by *Jos. Marshal*  
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sold all sorts of Bibles, Concordances, and  
Short-hand Books. 1708.



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THE  
PREFACE.

Kind Reader,

**T**HE Prophet Amos tells us, That in an evil time the prudent shall keep silence, Amos 5. 13. yet he must not turn Coward, and suffer the Truth to be wrong'd, when he has a Word to speak in its vindication: For there is another Text, which exhorts us to contend earnestly for the Faith, which was once deliver'd to the Saints; Jude, ver. 3. And if I have contended for any other Faith, or Opinion whatsoever, in the following Treatise, I desire the Lord to give me a discovery of it: But upon the most diligent search into the Word of God, which I have been enabled to make, the things which I have written appear to be true. The Arguments are rational, and I have as much as possible declined all biting, provoking Language; for one grain of sanctified Knowledge is better than a talent of proud disdainful Wit. I have forbore mentioning any Person or Party by Name, and yet perhaps some will think themselves concern'd; for when Error is struck against, 'tis

## The Preface.

a common thing for those that hold it to receive the blow: And when Mens Interests lead them into Errours, they seldom take Reproofs kindly. I foresee an Army of Opposers, but whatever Discouragements appear in the Front, I believe Truth and Peace will come in the Rear: If there be no such Opinions holden in the World, as I have levell'd my Arguments against, the People may think I was in a Dream; but if there be, then, though the Persons that maintain them be not detected, the Opinions themselves deserve to be confuted. It hath always been a grand piece of Satan's Policy, to perswade the World, that the Children of G O D were no Friends to Cæsar; but for my part, I believe, that G O D's best Servants are the King's best Subjects, in any Nation under Heaven: The Saints are no Despisers of Governours nor Government; only they desire to have their Consciences free in Matters of Religion, which, blessed be G O D, they have obtain'd in this Nation, though to the regret of those who love neither the Saints nor the Saints Benefactors. We have many Hamans yet amongst us, whose Merriment is much marr'd, because Mordecai the Jew sits at the King's Gate; and such will damn this Work, and the Author of it too; but if they do, I shall not wonder at that, for that is their common Language, and they have damn'd their own Souls a thousand times over: Such Men are all for Fire and Faggot, and what

## The Preface.

what they can't answer by Arguments, they'll endeavour to answer by a Prison; and those they can't convince by the Rule, they'll torment by the Rack: If their Logick fail, they'll bring a Law to supply its defect; by which it appears their Cause is very weak, because they seek to defend it by Iron Weapons.

But, passing by these, there is another sort, that (I fear) will give but cold entertainment to this Work, and those are the Laodicean Professors, who are neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm; such as can conform to any thing at a pinch, but are very strict when the Weather is fair, and the Way clean: Such will say of this Work as Judas said of the Ointment, What needs this waste? They love Peace, whether they have Truth or no, and resolve beforehand, that they'll never suffer for Religion, if temporizing will exempt them from it.

But there is a third sort, who are valiant for the Truth upon the Earth, and can be willing to sink their own Cargoe, that the Interest of Christ may swim; to whom nothing is precious, but what bears the Image of Jesus; and every thing is comely in their Eye, which comes clothed with the Habit of Truth: They love Christ under Poverty, Necessities, and Reproaches; and esteem it one great part of their Duty to vex them that dwell upon the Earth,

## The Preface.

*and bear a Testimony against all the ways of the Man of Sin. To such I dedicate the following Treatise, because 'tis their own; and I desire the Lord God of Israel may bless it to every True Israelite, who followeth the Lamb whithersoever he goes, not only destroying Baal's Images, but likewise departing from Jeroboam's Calves.*

Farewell.

A N



A N  
A P P E N D I X  
T O

*Delaune's Plea :*

Or, a New Dispute between  
*Adam Gojim and Ben Kabal, &c.*

*Adam.* **F**riend, I am heartily glad to see you ;  
for I have long desir'd such an Oppor-  
tunity, because we have been old  
Acquaintance.

*Ben.* I am glad to see you in health, and shall be  
much more glad, if we may have some profitable  
Talk to day.

*Adam.* That is my Desire, and the chief End of  
my coming to see you ; but I am heartily sorry to  
hear such bad News of you, and I fear 'tis true  
News too.

*Ben.* You know 'tis hard for Innocency it self to  
escape the Tongue of Detraction: But, I pray, what  
is the bad News you have heard of me ?

*Adam.* I am told that you have left our Church,  
and follow the Dissenters, when indeed I thought  
you had been a Man better establish'd in our Princi-  
ples ; but I hope your Wound is not incurable ;  
there-

therefore I chose this opportunity, to discourse with you about your new Religion.

*Ben.* I am very willing to render a Reason of the Hope that is in me, with meekness and fear, and if you will discourse with me in this manner, I am ready to answer your Desires.

*Adam.* I am very willing to use all possible Candour and Moderation with you ; but, I pray shew me, what are the things that you dislike in our Communion ?

*Ben.* For my part, I dislike but Four things in your Church, and if you can by good Scripture Arguments and Reasons reconcile me to them, I shall be ready to come into your Communion again.

*Adam.* I rejoyce to hear that you have no more Scruples upon you ; for I have met with some Dissenters that have made a great many more Objections against our Church : But, I pray, what are those Four things ?

*Ben.* They are four great things ; the first is, your *Church-Constitution* ; the second, your *Church-Worship* ; the third, your *Church-Doctrine* ; the fourth, your *Church-Conversation*.

*Adam.* I hope you don't think that every one of these four things are corrupt, for then I can't tell what to think of your Case ; however, I am willing to hear the best you can say against 'em, and withal shall endeavour to vindicate them so far as I am able. And I desire you, in the first place, to let me hear what you can say against the Constitution of our Church.

*Ben.* I have this to say, That in your Constitution there's neither the Gospel-matter nor the Gospel-form of a Church.

*Adam.* That is a very high Charge, which if you could prove, 'twould tempt me to do as you have.

*Ben.*

## Delaune's Plea.

*Ben.* This Charge is easily prov'd, thus: The generality of the Persons, which are the Matter of your Church, are great Strangers to a Work of Saving, Sanctifying Grace, and are visibly in a state of Unbelief and Unregeneracy. Now the Apostle tells us, *That the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; not Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, nor Fornicators, nor Idolaters,* living in, and practising any of these Sins, *1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.* To these the Apostle adds more, that are likewise excluded from being fit Matter to make a Gospel Church, who are guilty of these Works of the Flesh, *Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Revelling, &c. Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.* And he tells 'em plainly, that *they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; that is, they shall not be Members of the Church-militant on Earth, nor of the Church-triumphant in Heaven, except true Repentance change the Case.* To which Catalogue of Sinners I may add, *Common Swearers; Lyars, Sabbath-breakers, Cursers, Atheists, and Blasphemers; all which are also excluded: The Swearer is excluded, Jam. 5. 12. Swear not; (that is, swear not rashly, falsely, nor unnecessarily, in your common Discourse) neither by the Name of God; nor by the name of any of the Creatures, lest ye fall into Condemnation. The Lyar is excluded, that is, he that speaketh falsely with a purpose to deceive another: For without are Dogs (viz. Persecutors that bite like Dogs) and Sorcerers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lye, Rev. 22. 15. The Sabbath-breaker is excluded, for none may take hold of God's Covenant, to have a Name in his House and within his Walls, but only the Eunuchs that keep his Sabbaths, and chuse the things that please him, Isa. 56. 4, 5. The Curser he is shut out, Psal. 109. 17.*

*As*

*Ben.*

*As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.* This was spoken prophetically of *Judas*, who was never blessed with the Privilege of being a Member of the Gospel-Church, for that was not constituted till after Christ's Resurrection, and abolishing the Jewish Old Testament Constitution by his Death, but *Judas* hung himself before this time, *Mat. 27. 5.* The *Atheist* he is also excluded, for he that don't believe there is a God, can't worship him; *How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed?* *Rom. 10. 14.* And the *Antitrinitarians*, or those who deny a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, come under this rank; for as he is an *Atheist* that don't believe [that] God is, so he is also an *Atheist* that don't believe him to be [what] the Scriptures declare him to be; *Such are aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and without God in the World,* *Eph. 2. 12.* The *Blasphemer* or *Evil-speaker* must also stand without doors; *Paul* was such a one before his Conversion, and then he had no immediate Right to be a Member of the Christian Church, *who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious,* *1 Tim. 1. 13.*

*Adam.* I must confess that these marks belong to many in our Communion; but I hope we have some very zealous and righteous Persons amongst us.

*Ben.* There are two sorts of Zeal, a blind Zeal and an understanding Zeal: Some are more zealous for a Ceremony of their own invention, than for an Article of Faith; such a blind Zeal the *Jews* had: *For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge,* *Rom. 10. 2.* And whereas you say, you have some righteous Persons, you must know; there are two sorts of Righteousness; there is a Civil Righteousness, whereby Men

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deal justly between Man and Man, this many build upon, and make it their only Evidence for Heaven; they think they do justly towards all, when they have forgot the great Debt they owe to God, and there is not one Penny of that paid: And there is also a Righteousness which flows from the sanctifying Graces of the Holy Ghost, which leads Men out of themselves to Jesus Christ for Righteousness, making them desire with the Apostle, *to be found in him, not having their own Righteousness*, Phil. 3. 9. Now, I pray, where can you find such ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~, at present, in your Communion?

*Adam.* You talk very high, our Church is not so severe nor scrupulous about taking Persons into her Communion, we are willing to have Charity towards all Men.

*Ben.* I believe our Lord Jesus Christ had more Charity than you have, and yet he told them, *Except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 5. 20.

*Adam.* You have given your Thoughts as to the Matter of our Church; but, I pray, what can you say as to the Form of it?

*Ben.* Truly it is such a confus'd heap of Matter, that 'tis a hard thing to find any Form in it; for, in the first place, you make whole Parishes Churches, and take in Members by the lump, without making any separation between the Precious and the Vile; him that feareth God, and him that feareth him not; nay, How many thousands of poor, profligate, ignorant Souls have you forc'd to eat and drink Damnation to themselves, not discerning the Lord's Body? 1 Cor. 11. 29. And your Churches have no other bounds nor marks of distinction, but only such as are

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set up to distinguish between Town and Town, Parish and Parish. And then, in the second place, you have no way of entring into Communion, but by a blind, silent, implicit consent; so that when Persons come into your Society, no Man can tell whether force or choice brings them, or whether they be intended to stay with you or no; and perhaps that is one Reason why so many forsake you.

*Adam.* I pray what Rule have you to pick and chuse, when *the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Net that was cast into the Sea, and gathered of every kind?* Mat. 13. 47.

*Ben.* Tho' the preaching of the Gospel gathers both good and bad into an external profession of Religion, and some painted Hypocrites may by Flattery creep into the purest Churches, yet we have a plain Command, to gather none into Church-fellowship under the Gospel, but such as in a Judgment of Charity, by Scripture-marks, do appear to be truly converted: *Be ye not unequally yoked together with Unbelievers, for what fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? And what communion hath Light with Darkness?* 2 Cor. 6. 14. What spiritual Communion can a Holy Man have with a common Drunkard, Swearer, Lyar, Adulterer, and a Scoffer at Religion? How can the Dead and the Living dwell together in one House? Or how can the Serpent and the Dove live together in one Cage, when one sort of Food will not feed them?

*Adam.* Did not *Judas* eat the Lord's Supper with the other Disciples? And had the Primitive Churches no Hypocrites in them?

*Ben.* Notwithstanding you triumph much with this, it is very doubtful at best, whether *Judas* did eat the Lord's Supper; we know he ate the Passover, but

it seems by the Scripture he did not eat the Lord's Supper, for it is said in *Mat. 26. 19, 20. They made ready the Passover, and when the Even was come, he sate down with the twelve*: And *Vers. 23. He answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.* Now this was the Passover Dish, and the Sop that *Judas* receiv'd was the Passover Sop, for the Lord's Supper was not instituted till (*ver. 26.*) *Jesus took Bread and blessed it.* Now compare this with *John 13. 26. And when he had dipped the Sop, (that is, the Passover Sop) he gave it to Judas; and after the Sop, Satan enter'd into him, viz. by more strong impulses than before; Then said Jesus unto him, that thou doest, do quickly.* Now Christ bids him be gone about his wicked Design, he would have his company no longer; and, *v. 30. He then having received the Sop, went immediately out.* He was so overpower'd by a Diabolical Impulse, together with Shame and Horror, that he could not stay in Christ's company any longer; and when he was gone Christ institutes his Supper, and gives it to his Disciples. But if it could be prov'd, that *Judas* did eat the Supper, it would give no countenance to mixt Communion; for the Gospel-Church was not form'd till after Christ's Resurrection, and under the Old Testament Dispensation such Communion was lawful. And secondly, *Judas* appear'd to be a Saint, and we can judge but according to the outward appearance, and Christ did not always act according to his Omniscience, (for he knew what was in *Judas*) but sometimes he acted as a Man, according to the appearance of things: So that if you could prove what you assert, this would not justify your admitting of open Sinners to the Lord's Supper, for *Judas* was not such a one. And whereas you say, some Hypo-

crites were in the Primitive Churches, it is no Argument to prove that such ought to be in the Churches now; those Hypocrites *crept in unawares*, Jude v. 4. And because Poyson drops accidentally into one Man's Dish, shall another Man put Poyson into his own Dish wittingly?

*Adam.* I confess, this is a pretty plausible Argument; but, I pray, what Rule have you for your explicite Covenanting together, to become a Church?

*Ben.* The Apostle speaking of the Churches of Macedonia, 2 Cor. 8. 1. tells us, in ver. 5, how they came at first into Church-fellowship; they first gave their own selves to the Lord, that is, they did mutually agree to walk together in all the Ordinances of the Lord's House, and thereby became a Church; and they also gave themselves to the Apostles for Counsel and Direction, in this matter as well as in others, owning them as the Ministers of Jesus Christ. Now this Consent must be open and manifest, for if it had been a silent meeting, they could not have understood the Minds of each other, nor have known what each of them intended. Secondly, the Prophets speaking of Gospel-Days and Gospel-Churches spake of the particular Members of those Churches, as binding themselves to the Lord and to each other by Covenant; *Isa. 56. 4. For thus saith the Lord, Unto the Eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and chuse the things that please me, and take hold of my Covenant, even unto them will I give in mine House, and within my Walls, a Place and a Name better than of Sons and of Daughters, &c. They shall ask the way to Zion with their Faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us joyn our selves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant that shall not be forgotten, Jer. 30. 5. And accordingly we find it answer'd in the New Testament, Acts 9. 26. When*

Saul

*Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to joyn himself to the Disciples, &c.*

*Adam.* Well, tho' these things were used in the primitive days, our Church has thought fit to omit 'em; the generality of her Members can't bear such things.

*Ben.* Then you grant, that you have neither the Gospel-matter nor the Gospel-form of a Church: And since you have made this concession, I argue thus against you; Where the Matter and Form of a thing is wanting, the thing to be made of that Matter and Form is also wanting: But you grant, that the Matter and Form of a Gospel-Church is wanting in your Society, therefore the thing, to wit, a Gospel-Church, is not there: And if it be not of divine Appointment, 'tis a meer human Invention, and no one is bound in Conscience to come into such a Society; for where God hath not a Mouth to speak, we ought not to have an Ear to hear.

*Adam.* You are very smart upon me, and I have heard that some of your Party make Objections against the Government of our Church, and now I would fain hear what you have to say against it.

*Ben.* Not to mention the whole multitude of your Unscriptural Officers, who govern your Church, I shall by the way give you a hint, how National Churches were brought into being at first, with all that outward Pomp and Splendor with which they are adorn'd; and thus it was: After *Constantine* and other Christian Emperours, who liv'd about three or four hundred Years after Christ, had given much Liberty and many Gifts to such as embrac'd the Christian Religion, the golden Wedge invited many to joyn with the Christians, who would never have thought of such a thing if Religion had still gone in



ragged Cloaths, and under Persecution, as it had done before ; and as Liberty and Riches encreas'd, the Zeal of Professors decay'd, and so it became easie for carnal selfish Men to crowd themselves into Churches, and take up a Form of Religion ; when such were gotten in, they being full of Pride and Vain-glory, would have all things rul'd according to their Wills, and so they contriv'd to model the external Government of the Church, as near as might be, to the Civil Government of the *Roman Empire* : And as in the *Roman Empire* they had a Temporal Magistrate in every City, so had they also a Bishop for Spiritual Government, whose Jurisdiction was of like latitude : In every Province there was a Proconsul or President, whose Seat was usually at the Metropolis or chief City of the Province, and hither all inferiour Cities came for Judgment in matters of importance : And in proportion to this, there was in the same City an Archbishop or Metropolitan, for matters of Ecclesiastical Concernment. In every Diocefs (of which there were thirteen in the *Roman Empire*) the Emperours had their Lieutenants, who dwelt in the principal City of the Diocefs, where was the chief Tribunal, where all Causes not determinable elsewhere were decided : And to answer this, there was in the same City a Primate, to whom the last Determination of all Appeals in Ecclesiastical matters did belong. Thus National Churches rose upon the Shoulders of human Constitutions and Governments. You know who hath given us this account of things, and you durst not deny the Author.

*Adam.* I am afraid, by your going so far about the Bush, that you don't approve of Diocesane Bishops, when the Scriptures mention Bishops divers times.

*Ben.*



*Ben.* That the Scripture mentions Bishops, I know very well, and I know as well that it never mentions Diocesan Bishops, nor Arch-Bishops; the Greek word, which we translate Bishop, is *Episkopos*, a Visiter, an Overseer; and a Pastor of a Church is so called in the New Testament, because he ought to visit and feed his Sheep; the qualifications of such a Bishop are set down, *1 Tim. 3. 2, 3.* And so a Scripture-Bishop is no more than a Pastor to one single Congregation; and an Elder and Bishop are terms equivalent in Scripture, as appears by the 20th of the *Acts*, and the 17th verse, *And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the Elders of the Church.* Now those very Persons that are called *Presbyteros* *tes Ecclesias*, the Elders of the Church; in the 28th verse, they are called Bishops; *Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the Flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers.* In the Greek 'tis *Episkopous*, Bishops; by which it doth plainly appear, that a Presbyter and a Bishop are the same thing by Divine Institution; and these Elders were ordinary Officers of the Church of *Ephesus*; for they had a particular Charge there.

*Adam.* Truly this is such a notable place against Diocesan Bishops, that some of our own Church are puzzled about it; but forasmuch as the Apostles were superiour to ordinary Bishops or Pastors, why may not we have some Men in the place of the Apostles now?

*Ben.* All extraordinary Gifts and Officers are now ceased, the Apostles were extraordinary Officers, and had an extraordinary Power; but when they dy'd, that power dy'd with them; and God hath placed but two sorts of ordinary Officers in his Church, *viz.* Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons; To

all the Saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons, Phil. 1. 1. But now it is in my Mind, I will ask you one thing ; Do you believe that your Ministers are a part of God's Heritage ?

*Adam.* Yes that I do, and I think a great part of it too.

*Ben.* Then you must renounce Lord Bishops ; for the Apostle *Peter* writing to Ministers, exhorts them thus, 1 *Pet.* 5. 3. *Neither as being Lords over God's heritage ; but being ensamples to the flock.* Here he plainly forbids the Ministers of the Gospel to lord it one over another : Neither is there any reason for it ; for they have received the same Office and Authority from God, and where Men are equal, there is no room for Lordship. And our Lord Jesus himself forbids this thing, *Mat.* 20. 25. *Ye know that the Princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, but it shall not be so among you ; but whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.* Besides, 'tis a plain usurpation of Christ's peculiar Dignity and Office, who is the chief Shepherd and Lord Bishop of our Souls, 1 *Pet.* 5. 4.

*Adam.* Since you don't like Bishops, I am ready to think that you don't approve of our Churches way, of placing Ministers over the People.

*Ben.* Your People have no power to chuse or refuse in this case, you must take such as others impose upon you ; tho' you can't love, them you must have them : You have liberty to chuse Lawyers for your Estates, Physicians for your Bodies, Servants for your Work, but as for your poor Souls, you must take any thing that others obtrude upon you ; O miserable Case ! that a Man's present Edification, and future Welfare too, should depend so much up-

on

on the Wills of those that care for neither ; for commonly if there be any strife about a Benefice, he that has most Friends, or most Bribes, gets the Cure : But 'tis not so in the Churches of Christ : The Disciples chose *Matthias*, *Acts* 1. 15, 24, 26. And the whole Multitude chose the Deacons, *Acts* 6. 5. And the relation betwixt Pastor and People is Elective, not Natural, neither ought it to be Violent ; my Brother is my Brother without my Consent, but no Man can lawfully be my Pastor without it ; those that take the Charge of Souls, must be chosen by those whose Souls they take the Charge of : He looks much like a Wolf, who violently enters upon the possession of a Flock : 'Tis one indelible Character of the Merchants of *Babylon*, that they buy and sell the Souls of Men, *Revel.* 18. 13. The Apostles, nor their Assistants, never made a forcible Entry upon such a weighty Charge as the Care of Souls ; they durst not make Farms of such precious things as Immortal Spirits, nor deal with the Lord's Redeemed, as if they had dealt with the Beasts that perish : And Christ's Sheep know his Voice from the Voice of a Stranger, *John* 10. 4, 5. And they are commanded to try the Spirits and Doctrines of Men, *1 John* 4. 1. And the Holy Ghost hath given them Rules to try them by ; therefore they are capable of chusing their own Pastors, and of rejecting such as are not meet for that work.

*Adam.* I think 'tis time to leave this Head, and proceed to the Second ; but I think you can't say much for your self, nor against us, in points of Worship, yet, if you please, I desire you to give me your Thoughts about the principal parts of our Worship ; and, in the first place, What do you think of a Form of Prayer, which the Dissenters do generally re-  
proach ?

*Ben.*

*Ben.* My Judgment about imposed Forms of Prayer is, that they are neither profitable, comfortable, nor lawful; not profitable, a Man can't grow in them, because he is stinted to a set number of Words, and must never go beyond his Bounds, whatever new occasions offer themselves to him: They can't be comfortable, because those that use them must certainly want the quickening, reviving and enlarging assistances of the Holy Ghost; for those that enjoy the Soul-reviving presence of God, have both matter and manner, in some measure, given unto them, to put up holy Desires, and use holy Expressions, in the Duty of Prayer: Neither can it be lawful to use them; because a Form of Prayer is a Medium of Worship no where commanded, nor presided for the use of the New-Testament-Church after Christ's Resurrection; and to Worship God by any Medium which he himself hath not appointed, is sinful.

*Adam.* What, do you condemn all Forms of Prayer, then?

*Ben.* I condemn all Forms of Prayer composed by uninspired Men, and strictly used by others, or imposed upon others; but if a private Christian compose such a number of Petitions as he thinks most suitable to his present necessity, and withal intends to make such alterations, additions, variations and enlargements as God shall afterwards furnish him with, according to his various Necessities and future Occasions, such a Form I don't condemn: Neither do I condemn any Form of Prayer which God himself did at any time impose upon Old-Testament-Saints, who had not commonly such Gifts and Measures of the Spirit as New-Testament-Saints have; but I disallow the imposing of other Men's words, either upon our selves or others, in the Duty of Prayer.

*Adam.*



*Adam.* Can't a Man make a Prayer to God in other Men's words as well as his own?

*Ben.* No, he cannot, *For what Man knoweth the things of a Man, save the Spirit of Man which is in him?* 1 Cor. 2. 11. And if another Man don't know what particular Mercies we enjoy, and what Afflictions we groan under, how is it possible for him to suit us with Petitions and Thanksgivings suitable to our present Occasions? Therefore no Form can possibly be fitted for all occasions of our Lives, neither by our selves nor others; for new Mercies call for new Praises, and new Miseries call for new Deliverances, which, in some respect or other, are various every Day: Neither can a Man by reading a Form of another Man's composing be said to make a Prayer, any more than a Man by reading of a Chapter can be said to have made that Chapter; for tho' he assents to the other Man's Petitions, he can't be said to make them, because they were made ready to his hand.

*Adam.* Whatever Men may do in Private Prayer, yet I can't see how Men should pray in a publick Assembly without a Form; for how can those that hear pray with Understanding, when they don't know beforehand what the Minister will say?

*Ben.* You think this is a great Objection, but 'tis a very silly one; for you will allow, that a Man may hear a Sermon with understanding, though he hath not a Copy of it beforehand, and if every hearer had a Copy of the Minister's Sermon beforehand, the Minister need not preach at all: Therefore as a Man's Judgment may give an assent to a Divine Truth which he hears in a Sermon, though he never heard it before, so his Will and Affections may joyn to a holy Petition in Prayer, though he never

never

*Adam.*



never heard the Prayer before ; and to suppose otherwise, is to bring the hearers under a necessity of knowing as much before they come to hear, as after they have heard, and so there would be no need of Preaching, nor Praying neither, and some Men would like that well enough.

*Adam.* But may we not use that Prayer which Christ commanded his Disciples to use in the 6th of *Matthew* ? I hope you will not deny the Lord's Prayer ?

*Ben.* We own the Lord's Prayer to be a part of Canonical Scripture, and useful to instruct us about the matter of Prayer, as many other Scriptures both in the Old and New Testament are ; but we don't think that our Lord Jesus intended it as a strict form of Words, but as a general Theme, from whence they should draw the matter of their Petitions : When our Lord sent out his twelve Apostles to Preach the Gospel, he commanded them to go and Preach, saying, *The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, Mar. 10. 7. Now we are not to think, that Christ tyed up his Apostles to those very words, and those only, for then they had made short Sermons ; but hereby they were taught to preach the glad tydings of Salvation by the Messiah, and his sudden finishing the work of Redemption for Sinners, whether they used those very words or no : And so in this case, when our Lord says, *After this manner therefore pray ye*, he does not intend hereby to stint them to those very Syllables, for then their Prayers must have been very short ; but he gives them those Petitions as a general Theme to pray by, in respect of the matter of those things they were to pray for : But as to the manner of Prayer, 'tis evident, that these words were not design'd to be a rule to the New-

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Testament-Church after Christ's Resurrection; for now we are commanded to do whatsoever we do (in acts of Worship) *in the name of the Lord Jesus*, Col. 3. 17. And our Saviour tells his Disciples, That hitherto they had asked nothing in his Name; but after his Resurrection they were to make an expresse formal mention of his Name in their Prayers, *Joh. 16. 23, 24. Verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you*: But his Name is not once mention'd in all that Prayer, neither were they therein taught to make any mention of his working out Redemption and everlasting Salvation for them, which things are to be chiefly consider'd in all our Supplications in Gospel-days; by which it appears, that our Lord Jesus design'd it only for a temporary Rule as to the manner of Prayer, and so fitted it to the present necessity of his Disciples, under the Old-Testament-Dispensation, which lasted till Christ's Resurrection, and the abolishing of the *Levitical Priesthood, Services and Sacrifices*; and till these were abolish'd, the New-Testament-Church was not compleatly constituted; and the Disciples were Members of the Jewish Church, and subject to their Ordinances, till Christ abolish'd 'em by his Death, and Resurrection from the Dead. And as for those Forms of Blessing mention'd *Numb. 6. 24, 25.* and those Forms of Confession and Prayer mention'd *Deut. 26. 5, 13.* they were impos'd by God himself, for particular occasions, under the Dispensation of the Ceremonial Law, no way suiting our Worship under the New Testament. And we find the Saints, even in Old-Testament-days, making use of free Occasional Prayer, suited to their present Need, and such as could have no President in being, before that time in which they put up those Requests

to God. Take a few Instances of this kind: We find that *Abraham* pray'd for *Abimelech*, *Gen. xx. 17.* And what Form could he have for such an extraordinary occasion? *Abraham's* Servant pray'd, and pray'd excellently, *Gen. 24. 12.* yet he never had such an occasion to pray before. *Solomon* pray'd at the Dedication of the Temple, and pray'd a great while, *1 Kin. 8. 22, 54.* and yet that was the first Temple that ever was dedicated to the God of *Israel*. *Hezekiah* pray'd, and God heard his Prayer, *Isa. 38. 2, 3, 5.* and yet it was upon an extraordinary occasion that he then pray'd. I could never yet learn what Form *Jonah* could pray by, (*Jonah 2. 1.*) when he pray'd unto the Lord his God, in the Whale's Belly, certainly there never was a Form of Prayer compos'd for such a Case, for no Man ever was in the like Case before. But it is further to be consider'd, that if it could be prov'd, that God had prescrib'd the Old-Testament-Church a Form of Prayer for their Temple-worship, (which yet none can make appear) it will not follow, that because God impos'd a Form upon Old-Testament-Saints, it should therefore be lawful for Men to impose a Form upon New-Testament-Churches: God commanded the making of a Tabernacle, Ark, Altar, and Priests Garments, but we can't from hence conclude, that 'tis lawful for Men (without Divine Warrant) to do the like. In the 28th of *Exodus*, and the 4th Verse, God commanded *Moses* to make an Ephod, (this was approved because commanded) but when *Gideon* made an Ephod of his own head, this became a Snare unto *Gideon*, and to his House, *Judg. 8. 27.*

*Adam*, I will grant that there is something of Argument in what you say; but if Ministers can't pray without a Form, I think 'tis lawful for them to make

use of one ; for we don't deny a lame Man Crutches.

*Ben.* Tho' you don't deny a lame Man Crutches, yet you will do that which is as ill ; for you will deny a sound Man to make use of his own Legs, upon this account ; but I don't conceive that any Man is qualify'd to be a Minister of the Gospel, if he wants the Gift of Prayer, when Prayer is a Duty that he ought to be found frequently in ; The Apostle exhorts *Timothy*, to make Prayers and Supplications for all Men, that is, all sorts of Men, 1 *Tim.* 2.

1. And how poorly does it look of a Minister, when he is called to pray for an Assembly, or to visit the Sick, if he can't put up one Petition for them, till he has pull'd his Prayers out of his Pocket ; and 'tis as good sense, to call him a Workman that could never work, as to call him a Minister that could never pray nor preach : And 'tis certain, that none can prove, that there was any limited or imposed Form of Prayer, used in the publick Worship of Christians for the first two or three hundred years after Christ ; but when Ministers degenerated into Sloth and Ignorance, in the fourth and fifth Centuries, those Forms and Liturgies began to creep in ; but it was much longer before they were generally imposed.

*Adam.* You have spoken largely concerning Prayer, but I think you can have nothing to say against our Preaching.

*Ben.* Yes truly, I have as much to say against your Preaching ; for I don't like either the matter, manner, or end of your Preaching ; not the matter, which mostly contains at best but a poor, little, sorry, flat discourse of Morality, the great Truths of the Gospel being in a manner wholly omitted, by the generality of your Ministers : Nor I don't like the manner, which is to pick here a little, and there a



little out of other Mens Labours, and so patch up a Discourse of half an hour long, and when that is done, read it line by line to the people, as School-boys read a Chapter at School: Nor I can't be reconciled to that which doth too evidently appear to be the End, which is commonly Honour and Interest, but chiefly the latter; for your Ministers can't expect much of the former.

*Adam.* This is an high Charge, and if it could be proved, would contribute much to the Disparagement of our Church; but I pray shew me more particularly wherein our Ministers deviate from the Rules of the Scripture in their Preaching.

*Ben.* Not to speak of the Corruptions in their Doctrine, which may be considered anon: In the first place, your Ministers don't imitate the Apostle *Paul* in Preaching; for he told the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus*, that he had *not shunned to declare unto them all the Counsel of God*, *Acts 20. 27.* Now a Man may go to hear your Ministers twenty years together, and yet never hear the most Substantial Doctrines of the Gospel, as the Trinity; Decrees of God; Covenant of Redemption; Grace; Imputed Righteousness; the Mystery of Sanctification, and final perseverance of the Saints: But the Apostle *Paul* preached these things, and there is frequent mention of these things in his Epistles; he tells the *Corinthians*, That he determined not to know any thing among them, save *Jesus Christ, and him crucify'd*, *1 Cor. 2. 2.* And in ver. 7. *But we speak the wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.*

*Adam.* I wish we could do all that our Ministers say, and then I question not but we should be happy:

*Ben.*

*Ben.* How ignorantly you talk ! The great things of the Scriptures, some of which I mentioned just now, are the Object of our Faith, and not of our practice ; they are to be believed, not to be wrought ; for there are two parts of Divinity, the one belongs to the Knowledge of God, and the other to the Worship of God ; the first contains things to be believed ; the second, things to be performed ; and if we be not found in Faith, we can't be found in Practice, for Faith is the Root of good works ; *I believed, and therefore have I spoken ; we also believe, and therefore speak,* 2 Cor. 4. 13. Where Christ is not plainly and powerfully preached, in his Incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection, and Exaltation, whatever else is preached, is but a sound of Words to little purpose : Now your Ministers are lamentably defective in the matter of their preaching.

*Adam.* What they want in the matter, they make up in the manner, for I am sure they set off their Work as learnedly and neatly as any in the World.

*Ben.* I pray don't boast too soon, the manner as well as the matter of Preaching is directed by the word of God ; and we find that the Ministers of the New Testament performed this work by the assistance of the Spirit of God, enabling and strengthening them in their diligent Meditations upon God's word, contain'd in the holy Scriptures ; and whenever they were called forth to preach the Gospel, they made use of no other Book but the Scriptures, in the Art of Preaching ; for they are able to make *the Man of God perfect, thorowly furnished unto all good works,* 2 Tim. 3. 17. They did not build upon other mens Foundations, nor rejoyce in other mens Lines ; though 'tis lawful and profitable to read the Works of others, yet the Ministers of Christ should have Salt

in themselves ; and we find that Jesus Christ, the great Minister of God, when he preached that excellent Sermon, in the fourth of *Luke*, and the 18 verse, made use of no other Book, but God's Book ; he did not read a Sermon of any of the old *Rabbies* ; but he read a portion of God's Book, the Book of the Prophet *Esaïas* ; And when he had opened the Book, he found the place where it was written ; *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, &c.* And when he had read his Text, he closed the Book and gave it again to the Minister ; he did not read his Sermon, though he read his Text ; And he began to say unto them, *This Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears* ; and so he went on expounding and applying that Text, and brought others to confirm the Truth of what he said, verse 26, 27. We can't find that *Peter* read that excellent and effectual Sermon in *Acts* 2. 14. which Discourse he grounded upon the Prophecie of *Joel*, ver. 16, 17. If *Paul* had read his Sermons, he need not have been so earnest with the *Ephesians* to pray for him, that utterance might be given him, to open his mouth boldly, *Ephes.* 6. 19. For it had been an easie matter to read what was before his Eyes : Besides, Preaching and Reading are distinct Ordinances, The Scriptures distinguishes them very plainly ; in the 8th of the *Acts*. ver. 28, 'tis said, that the Eunuch [*Aneginoske*] read *Esaïas* the prophet, but did not understand it, so desir'd *Philip* to teach him, v. 35. Then *Philip* opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and [*Evangelisato*] preached unto him *Jesus*. Now here *Philip's* expounding of the Scripture to the Eunuch is called Preaching, and 'tis distinguished from the Eunuch's reading of it ; for if *Philip* had begun at the same Scripture, and read on without expounding

pounding, the Eunuch had been never the wiser. And your Ministers vary from the Apostles in the wording of their matter; for many of them use such Scholastick Phrases, and hard Terms, that if their matter were never so excellent, the generality of their hearers could edify but little by them; but the Apostles spake with all plainness of Speech, that the most unlearned might understand them: *Paul* tells us, his speech and his Preaching, was not with enticing words of Man's wisdom, *1 Cor. 2. 4.*

*Adam.* I think we may be something to blame in these Cases; but I suppose you can find no great fault with the other parts of our worship; and now to hasten, I pray give me your Objections in short, which you make against our Administration of the other parts of Religious Worship.

*Ben.* Well then, to come to the Lord's Supper; it hath been proved before, that none but such as appear to be Saints ought to be admitted, but you admit Men, though they be open Sinners; and your gesture of Kneeling is unscriptural; for Christ and his Disciples sate at it, *Mat. 26. 20.* Now when the *Even* was come, he sate down with the Twelve; And we don't find that they altered their posture; for sitting is a Table-gesture, and the Lord's Supper is a Believer's Feast, and we should count it a very odd thing, to see persons kneel at a Feast; though at the blessing of the Elements, which is a Prayer, and distinct from eating, we commonly stand; because we find in Scripture, that standing is a praying posture, as well as kneeling: As for Baptism, not to say any thing of the Subject, or Mode of it, there are two things which you use in the Administration of it very unaccountable; First, the Sign of the Cross, a mark so like the mark of the Beast, that I



know nothing more like it : Secondly, your use of Gossips, who bind themselves to do that for another, which no Man can do for himself. Singing, your Instrumental Musick is a meer *Jewish* Rite, which, as it was a part of their Temple-service, so (together with the rest of it,) was abolished by the Death of Christ; *For the law was but a shadow of good things to come*, Heb. 10. 1. *Wherefore should we turn again to the weak and beggarly Elements*, Gal. 4. 9. when Jesus Christ hath taken them out of the way, and *nailed them to his Cross*? Col. 2. 14. This is but to raise up Moses again from the dead : Indeed under the Old Testament such kind of Musick was commanded by God, 2 Chron. 29. 25. *And he set the Levites in the House of the Lord, with Cymbals, with Psalteries, and with Harps; for so was the Commandment of the Lord by his Prophets*: And except we had a plain Institution of it, in the New Testament, as they had in the old, we have no ground to practise it, any more than we have to practise Circumcision, and offering of Sacrifices, which we are sure are abolished : Neither is it any way suitable to the gravity and Solemnity of Christian worship, nor was ever practised amongst those called Christians, till Pope *Vitalian's* time, *Anno Christi* 690. As for Excommunication, and Church-censure, 'tis well known what a Sham is made of that, 'tis a very solemn Ordinance, and the power of administering it belongs to every particular Church, and her Officers, as appears by 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. *In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, to deliver such an one unto Satan, for the destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus*. But when you Excommunicate any, 'tis commonly out of Malice, and instead of humbling the

the person, it rather hardens him. Who was ever Reformed by your Censures? The End of the Ordinance is not to impoverish a Man, or weaken his Estate, or abridge his Civil Liberty; but 'tis for the weakening of his Sin, or the Destruction of the Flesh, that his Wound may be healed, and his Soul saved. Thus it appears that you don't perform so much as one piece of publick solemn Worship according to Christ's Institution.

*Adam.* Our Church-Governours have thought fit to add some things and alter others; but a Church doth not cease to be a Church of Christ because of some Innovations; you know there were several Abuses and Corruptions in the Church of *Corinth*, yet it did not cease to be a Church.

*Ben.* It would have ceased to be a Church of Christ, if those Abuses had gone on time out of mind, and had never been reformed; the seven Churches of *Asia*, and others, are a sufficient witness of this; and whereas you say, the Church-Governours have thought fit to add and alter in some Cases, this is a foolish Argument, for Christ hath not left it to the Wills of Men to worship him in what way they think fit, or their Rulers think fit; for then a Man might profess one Religion in *England*, and another Religion in *France*, and so change his Religion as often as he changes his Governours, or his Country: But if this be true, then all the sufferings of our Martyrs where in Vain; *But we ought to obey God rather than Men*, Acts 5. 29.

*Adam.* You go too far, I don't say that they have power to make Religion wholly new; but only to determine some things in it, for Decency sake.

*Ben.* Our Lord Jesus knew better than any other what was decent, and what was not, and the Decency

cency which he hath prescribed in his word, is the Decency which we are to look after ; and you can't say, that he hath told us any where in the Scriptures what Rules of Decency he hath left to Men to prescribe, which are not there enjoyn'd : So, if what you say be admitted, there will be no end of human Prescriptions, and we shall ne'r know when we have learnt our Religion ; for one Man may think *this* is decent ; and another, *that* is decent ; and if a hundred Superstitions more should be crowded into the Worship of God, those that invent them would count them all Decent, therefore we must *hear what God the Lord saith*, Psal. 85. 8.

*Adam.* You are one of those whom the Apostle *Peter* speaks of, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. Who despise Government, which are presumptuous and self-willed, and are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities.

*Ben.* This unjust Charge is commonly brought by the persecutors of Religion, against the Saints ; and it arises from this piece of Ignorance ; because they think that whatsoever is commanded by superiours, is binding to the Consciences of their Subjects, but this is utterly false ; for though we are obliged by the Law of God to yield Obedience to our Rulers in all reasonable and Lawful things, yet if they make any Law contrary to God's Law, therein we are not to obey them, such Laws lay no Obligation upon our Consciences, because God's Law hath already made them void : Now if the godly live under such Governments as require things which God's Law forbids, they are laid under a necessity to act against the Government, in taking God's part, of which we have divers Instances in Scripture. When King *Jeroboam* had, against the command of God, set up two golden Calves ; *There*

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came a Man of God out of Judah, by the word of the Lord unto Bethel, and he cried against the Altar in the word of the Lord, 1 Kings 13. 1, 2. Now I pray did not this Man speak against the established Religion and Government, when he spake against the worship which the King had set up? and yet he did but his Duty, for the Lord sent him to do it. And surely, *Elijah* acted against the Government, as it was then corrupted, when he reprov'd King *Ahab* so boldly, 1 Kings 18. 18. saying, *I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the Commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.* Did not *Daniel* act against the Government, when there was a Royal Statute made, That none should pray to any God or Man for thirty Days, but unto the King only; and yet *Daniel*, not regarding this Law, prays to his God three times a day? *Dan.* 6. 7, 10. *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego* acted against the Government, when they would not worship the golden Image, the King had set up, *Dan.* 3. 18. Though he could bewitch others with his Musick, and the gaudy whorish Dress of his Idolatrous Worship, he could not stir these in the least, neither by Allurements nor Threatnings. And did not our Saviour himself speak against the Ecclesiastical Government, when he told the Scribes and Pharisees, That *they had made the Commandment of God of none effect by their Traditions?* *Mat.* 15. 6. And surely the Apostle *Paul* preached against the Heathenish Government, when he perswaded, and turned away much people, saying, *That they be no Gods which are made with Hands,* *Acts* 19. 26. And did not the Nonconformity of the primitive Christians speak loudly against the Idolatrous Government which was then in the world, when they

would



would not offer a Grain of Frankincense to a Pagan Idol, to save their own Lives? Thus you see, the Servants of Christ have always thought it their Duty to speak against the Laws of Men, when those Laws have commanded things contrary to the word of God: And as for the Text you have mentioned, it makes nothing against godly Dissenters, who judge it their Duty to pray for their Governours, and to obey all their Lawful Commands; and withal to bear a Testimony for God against every thing which is done contrary to the Word of God, and the Edification of the Souls of Men: But the Text speaks against certain false Teachers, who walked after their own Lusts, in Contempt both of the Laws of God, and of the wholesome Laws of the places where they dwelt.

*Adam.* I think 'tis time to have done with this Head about Worship, let us come to Doctrinal points, and there, I am sure, we have as sound Articles as any of you all.

*Ben.* The Church of *Israel* had very sound Articles, as sound as yours; for to them pertained the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises, *Rom.* 9. 4. yet that Church fell from those things into great Idolatry and Profaneness, and what Christ said to them we may say to you, *John* 7. 19. *Did not Moses give you the Law, and yet none of you keepeth the Law?* So may we say, Did not our good old Reformers give you sound Doctrine about Election, Reprobation, final perseverance of the Saints, &c. But which of you preach this Doctrine?

*Adam.* Then I understand you hold Election and Reprobation; but, for my part, I will not believe that, for

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for then we may live as we list ; but however, I am willing to hear what you can say for it.

*Ben.* The Scriptures are plain for both, and it must needs be so ; for if there be a God, as we are sure there is, he that made all the Creatures, must determine, direct and dispose them to their several Ends, to the Vessels of Mercy, or the Vessels of Wrath : Now that there is an Election of some to Eternal Life, is sufficiently declared by the Holy Scriptures ; God told Moses, *Exod. 33. 17.* That he had found Grace in his sight, and he knew him by Name ; and in the 19th Verse, he tells him, *That he will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom he will shew mercy.* David saith, *Blessed is the man whom thou chusest, and causest to approach unto thee, Psal. 65. 4.* The Prophet Esay tells us, That God will give Drink, *viz.* Spiritual Gifts and Consolation to his People, his Chosen, *Isa. 43. 20.* And our Saviour tells us what shall be pronounced upon some at the end of the World, *Mat. 25. 34.* *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* The Apostle Paul tells the Thessalonians, *2 Thes. 2. 13.* *We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, Brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* By all which places (and many more) it doth evidently appear, that all those that are saved by Jesus Christ, were chosen to this Salvation beforehand.

*Adam.* I believe God foreknew all things, and so he knew who would obey his Commandments and who would not ; and he chose those that he knew would chuse him.

*Ben.*

*Ben.* This favours of a great deal of Ignorance of the Doctrine of the Gospel ; for it supposes, that there is power in the Will of Man to chuse God now Man is fallen from God : And it also supposes, that the Will of the Creature moves and draws the Will of God towards it, and that fallen Man is saved by his own Obedience : But the Scripture shews us other things ; it shews us, that the Will of the Creator is a free, sovereign and independent Will, that there is nothing, nor can be nothing in the Creature to draw and incline the Will of God towards it ; for the Creature hath its Being and all that it hath from God, and whatsoever good it hath, is first given by him ; then there can be no good in the Creature, antecedent to his Will and Purpose to do it good : And instead of God's foreseeing any good in the Creature in its fallen state, he foreknew all the Evil that would be in it, all the Sins that it would commit, and notwithstanding this, out of his free, undeserved and undesired Favour, he hath chosen some of the fallen Race of *Adam* unto Salvation by Jesus Christ, having predestinated us unto the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, *Ephes. 1. 5.* And our Saviour tells his Disciples, *John 15. 16. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.* That is, you did not chuse me first, nor your chusing me was no cause of my chusing you, but the effect of that Choice.

*Adam.* This Doctrine sounds very strangely in my Ears ; but if all this should be granted, 'tis certain you can't prove that God hath reprobated, or rejected any of his Creatures before they were born, as some of you hold.

*Ben.* Do you think that any can be saved without an Interest in Christ ?

*Adam.* I will not say so, but I pray what is this to the purpose ?

*Ben.* All that have a saving Interest in Christ were elected to this Interest, *Ephes. 1. 4. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ : According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.* By this it appears, that Christ and all his saving Benefits were given to us in our Election, and that there is no other way whereby Christ can be given to us, and we to him ; for he hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings according to that choice : Now there are some that God never designed to bless with these spiritual Blessings, and they were reprobated : Our Saviour spake of these when he tells his Disciples, *It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them, that is, the Reprobate, it is not given, Mat. 13. 11.*

*Adam.* I pray don't use any Circumlocutions, for I would fain hear you prove Reprobation by plain Scripture, if you can, but I doubt no man can do that.

*Ben.* The Scripture is as plain for Reprobation as it is for Election, as appears by these Texts, *Isa. 41. 9. I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away ;* by this it seems some are cast away : *Reprobate Silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them, Jer. 6. 30.* Was not Esau Jacob's brother ? saith the Lord ; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau ; and the Apostle applies this love and hatred to the persons of Jacob and Esau, *Rom. 9. 13. The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded, Rom. 11. 7.*

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*Ben.*



For God hath not appointed us to wrath; but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ; intimating, that God hath appointed some to wrath, 1 Thes. 5. 9. And some to honour, and some to dishonour, 2 Tim. 2. 20. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of Old, (*viz.* from Eternity) ordained to this Condemnation.

*Adam.* God might foresee who would continue in sin, and so reject them upon that account; but I can't believe that there is any such thing as absolute Reprobation.

*Ben.* Yes, Reprobation is absolute as well as Election, and depends only upon God's Sovereign will and pleasure; and as foreseen Holiness was not the impulsive cause of Election, so neither was foreseen Sin the Cause of Reprobation; then all Mankind must be Reprobate; for all men are sinners, and their Sins are foreseen; And the Scripture shews us that Reprobation depends as much upon God's absolute will as Election, Rom. 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth:* And Esau was hated before he had done any Evil, ver. 11, 12. *For the Children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, it was said unto her, The Elder shall serve the younger. Esau have I hated:* And our Lord Jesus himself ascribes God's hiding the Knowledge of Salvation from some, to the Sovereign Will of God, Mat. 11: 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent; Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight:* But to set this thing in as clear a Light as may be, I would have you to remember, that there is distinction to be made between Reprobation or Preterition, and Predamnation; for Reprobation is the

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denial of undeserved Grace, but Predamnation is the ordaining the Reprobate to deserved punishment for their Sin: the former Act is absolute, the latter is respective, respecting the Creatures Disobedience: And as Christ's Obedience is the Cause, not of Election, but Salvation; so the Creatures Disobedience is the Cause, not of Reprobation, but of Damnation.

*Adam.* But after all, it seems, if a Man be elected, let him live never so vitiously he shall be saved; and if he be reprobated, though he lives never so piously, he must be damned.

*Ben.* This is your absurd Conclusion, which is no where found in the premises; for these things are utterly inconsistent; he that is elected, is elected to Holiness as well as Happiness, and this Holiness is purchased for all the Elect by Jesus Christ, and shall be certainly given unto them in time: *We are chosen in him, that we should be holy and without blame, before him in love, Ephes. 1. 4. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them, Ephes. 2. 10.* He that hath Christ hath all things pertaining to spiritual Life and Godliness: But on the other hand, as the Reprobate have not Christ, so neither have they any holiness, but are left under the power of a depraved fallen Nature, and never have a sincere desire to be brought out of that State; as 'tis said of Eli's Sons, *they hearkened not to the voice of their Father, because the Lord would slay them, 1 Sam. 2. 25.* They were not designed for Heaven, and so they had no holiness given them, to prepare them for it: The Reprobate delight in sin, and desire to live in it to the End of their Days, and though they perish, they have their own Choice; for *the Wages of Sin is Death.*

*Adam.* But why should the Lord punish them for sinning against him, if they are not in a Capacity to do better?

*Ben.* Their weakness will never excuse their wickedness; for the more weakness and depravity there is in a Sinner, the more free is the Sinners will to sin; and the more of willingness there is in any Sin, the greater it is: But if this Answer will not please you, I desire you to go to the Apostle Paul for an Answer; for when he met with such a bold Objector as you, his reply was, *Nay, but O Man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Rom. 9. 20.*

*Adam.* I don't understand how you can clear God from being the Author of Sin, and I think I have heard some of you speak as if God had decreed the sinful Actions of men; such Errours do your Doctrine lead men to, which I think borders upon Blasphemy.

*Ben.* When men don't know what to say, 'tis a common thing to cry out, *Blasphemy*; but I will make it manifest by the Scriptures, that 'tis no Blasphemy, nor yet no Errour, to say, that God hath determined and decreed the sinful Actions of Men: And in the first place, we are told, that when God sent Nathan unto David, to convince David of his Sin, the Lord spake to David, 2 Sam. 12. 11. *I will take thy wives before thine Eyes, and give them unto thy Neighbour, and he shall lye with thy wives in the sight of this sun.* By this it appears, that Absalom's sin in lying with his Fathers wives was decreed before it was committed; and according to this Decree he acted, Chap. 16. 22. *So they spread Absalom a Tent upon the Top of the house, and Absalom went in unto his Fathers*

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*Concubines, in the sight of all Israel. Judas's sin of betraying Christ was decreed beforehand; For of a Truth against thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And this Sin was foretold by the Lord a thousand years before it was committed, both in the 2d and 109th Psalms. The Sins of the Amorites were foretold four hundred years before some of them were committed, Gen. 15. 16. For the Iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. The Babylonians had a measure of Covetousness to fill up, Jer. 51. 13. And so Mat. 23. 32. Fill ye up then the measure of your Fathers: And all that Unbelief which the Jews have lain under almost seventeen hundred years, was foretold by the Apostle, (and so, as to the event, made necessary, for the Scripture must be fulfilled) Rom. 11. 25. Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. The sins of the Romish Antichristian Church, in presenting the Saints, and worshipping the Beast or Pope, were foretold long before they were committed, Revel. 13. 7, 8. And it was given unto him to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them: And all that dwell upon the Earth, (that is all Earthly Professors) shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the world. This Book of Life is God's Decree of Salvation.*

*Adam.* I can't deny but that these Scriptures seem to look this way, but yet I can't understand which way God can have a hand in ordering sin, and yet not be the Author of Sin.

*Ben.*



*Ben.* God may have a fourfold power over Sin, and yet not be the Author of Sin, and the Scriptures mention such a fourfold power, that God hath over Sin: First, he permits it; and who durst blame him upon this account, for he never bound himself to the contrary? *Who in Times past suffered all Nations to walk in their own ways,* Acts 14. 16. Secondly, he deserts the Creature, and leaves it to its self, and denies it his quickening upholding power, leaving it to that Blindness and Ignorance which necessarily follows upon his withdrawing from it: So God is said to harden *Pharoah's Heart*, by denying him heart-softening Grace, *Exod. 7. 3. And I will harden Pharoah's heart:* And who may charge God with Iniquity? For it is lawful for him to do what he will with his own. There is a notable place to this purpose in *Ezek. 14. 19. And if the Prophet be deceived, when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that Prophet,* (*viz.* by giving him up to the deceits of his own heart, to Prophecie falsely.) Thirdly, God restrains sin, and keeps it within bounds, he restrains the Devil himself, as in the Case of *Job*, Satan would have gone further if God had not restrained him: *Surely the wrath of Man shall praise thee; The Remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain,* Psal. 76. 10. Fourthly, he orders and directs the Sins of Men to some excellent End and Purpose, the manifestation of his glorious Attributes, his mercy and justice, in pardoning some, and condemning others, *Rom. 9. 22, 23. What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering, the Vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known, the riches of his Glory, on the Vessels of Mercy, which he had afore prepared unto Glory? So he hath made all Things for himself;*

*self; yea, even the wicked for the Day of Evil, Prov. 16. 4. In every Act of sin the Act is of God, as it is a Natural Action; for in him we live, and move, and have our being; and he upholds us in the Action, or else we should cease to be, and so cease to do; But the Obliquity, the Crookedness, and Evil of the Action is from our selves, as the immediate cause of it: Thus God made Man upright; but they have sought out many Inventions, Eccles. 7. 29.*

*Adam.* This is hard kind of Doctrine, and I don't hear our Ministers Preach such things as these; and for my part, I can't believe that God leaves any Man, till he leaves God!

*Ben.* God leaves the Creatures in a double sense, in a way of Absolute Sovereignty, and in a way of strict Justice; First in a way of absolute Sovereignty, and so he left many of the Angels to fall; for you can't tell me what Sin the Angels committed before they were suffered to forsake their own habitation, or to grow discontent therewith, *Jude* ver. 4th. Neither can we find that *Adam* committed any sin before he desired to eat the forbidden Fruit, or thought upon the doing of it; and yet it doth evidently appear, that they were suffered to do these things; and they must be withdrawn from God too, in order to their doing them; and that appears thus: First, they could not be created immutable, then they had been God's; nor they could not be independent, then they had not been Creatures; therefore they were both mutable, and dependent by their Creation. Secondly, If they were mutable by Creation, they stood in need of the Creator, to keep them from changing; and if they were dependent, then they stood in need of the Creator, to uphold them in their primitive Holiness and Integrity. Thirdly,

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If he had so upholden them when they fell, as he upheld them before they fell, they could not have fallen: Indeed he took none of their Inherent Holiness from them before they fell, but only those concurring Aids, which as Creatures they stood in absolute need of, to uphold them in their Primitive Station: These concurring Aids were withdrawn from *Adam*, and the Angels that fell, (for God had not promised that they should stand) upon which they were left to stand of themselves, by their created, mutable, dependent power, but, for want of those concurring Aids, they immediately fell, and 'tis certain that no Creature can stand without them; for the Second *Adam* himself, as he was Man, could not stand without them; yet I suppose you will grant, that the second *Adam*, Jesus Christ, had as much power as the first; now he professes, that he could not stand without the Fathers concurring Aids, to support and uphold him, *John* 5. 30. *I can of mine own self do nothing*: He tells us, he could not speak a good word of himself, as he was Man, *John* 8. 28. *When ye have lift up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of my self; but as my father hath taught me, I speak these things*; and therefore the Lord promised to hold his hand, and to keep him, *Isai.* 42. 6. *I the Lord have called thee in Righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles*. If this thing were well understood, there would be no room for any Conceits of a power in the Creature to uphold it self in its being or well-being.

*Adam*. I understand by your Discourse, that you think God decreed the fall of our first Parents, but I can't believe that.

*Ben.*

*Ben.* Then you can't believe the Gospel ; for the Scripture tells us, that Jesus Christ was set up from Everlasting, to be a Mediator between God and Man, *Pro. 8. 23. I was set up from Everlasting from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was.* Now if Christ were ordained to be a Mediator, before *Adam* was made, it was upon God's foresight and determination of *Adam's* fall ; for if we had continued in Innocency, we had needed no Mediator. Secondly, If God the Father made a Covenant with God the Son, for the Redemption of Sinners, before the world began, then *Adam's* fall was designed by God ; But the Scripture tells us of such a Covenant before time, in the womb of Eternity, *Titus 1. 2. In hope of Eternal Life, which God that cannot lye promised before the world began :* Now this Promise could not be made to Angels or men, because they had no being before the world began ; therefore it must be made to Christ. Thirdly, If any were chosen in Christ before the world began, then *Adam's* fall was determined by the Lord, (for if he had stood, we had needed no Saviour.) But *some were chosen in Christ before the Foundation of the World, Ephes. 1. 4.*

*Adam.* But doth not the Scripture tell us, that we chuse our own ways, and therefore God chuseth our Delusions for us, *Isai. 66. 3, 4?*

*Ben.* I told you before, that God leaves the Creatures by a double Act, by an Act of meer Sovereignty, and so he left *Adam*, and the Angels that fell ; and Secondly, by an Act of Justice ; and so he leaves, and withdraws himself from *Adam's* sinful Posterity, who deserve to be so left, and he doth also give them up to Errours and Delusions in a judicial way, for their former Sins ; And so you are to understand the Text you have quoted, and likewise that Text,

2 *Thes.*

*Ben.*



2 Thes. 2. 10, 11. *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lye, &c.* And whereas you say, that God leaves no Man before he leaves God, there is something true and something false in your Position; for it is evident, that God left the Angels that fell by a meer act of his Sovereignty, and likewise innocent *Adam*, because there was no previous Evil in them, antecedent to his withdrawing his upholding Power from them, for they came pure out of his Hands; neither did his deserting them infuse any Evil into them; but only left them to fall of themselves, who being but Creatures, could not stand of themselves: But now *Adam* being fallen, and all that he stood for being fallen in him, God in justice deserts humane Nature, and denies his Image to every Soul that comes from *Adam's* Loins, in a way of common Generation, and and that in the very moment of its Conception; so we are fallen from God before we are born, and now God might in strict Justice forsake us all for ever under this Consideration.

*Adam.* You speak as if God had decreed all Events from the beginning of the World to the end of Time; but this Doctrine has but little credit with us.

*Ben.* Now I believe you, but there is nothing more sure than this; for if all the Creatures depend upon God in every Act they perform, and he knew his own designs concerning the works of his Hands, it will unavoidably follow, that he hath decreed all Events, the smallest as well as the greatest; for he tells us, *I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, Isa. 46. 9, 10.*

Yea,

Yea, the most casual and contingent Events, the smallest and most unheeded things are determined by God: Those things that come to pass, as we say, by Casualty, are decreed beforehand, as appears by *Exodus 21. 13.* *And if a Man lie not in wait,* (that is, doth not wittingly and willingly speak to hurt his Neighbour, but God deliver him into his hand, here is God's Act in delivering up a Man to dye, tho' he be killed by an accident) *then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee.* As when a Man goeth into the wood with his Neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetched a stroke with the Axe to cut down the Tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his Neighbour, that he dye, &c. *Deut. 19. 5.* And the most unheeded Events are decreed. I pray who takes any notice of a Bird's dying, or an Hair's falling? yet these small things are guided by Providence, as our Saviour tells us, *Mat. 10. 29, 30.* *Are not two Sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father: But the very hairs of your head are numbred.*

*Adam.* If you hold these things you must take away the natural liberty of Man's Will, and so take away the nature both of Virtue and Vice from all his Actions.

*Ben.* That is another of your Mistakes, for this Doctrine Establishes the liberty of Man's Will; for we hold, That God hath determined that Men should act as freely upon Choice and Deliberation, as if there were no decree upon their Actions; so in the sins of Men, though God hath decreed them, yet he hath decreed also, that they shall make them and chuse them freely; God will not be the Author of them, though he will be the Orderer of them, and 'tis for his own glory, or else he would never have fore-

fore-appointed them : There is a Text in *Mat.* 26. 24. which gives great light into this matter, 'tis spoken concerning *Judas's* betraying of Christ ; *The Son of man goeth as it is written of him ; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed ; it had been good for that man if he had not been born.* Here we may observe, there was first a Decree upon the Action, Christ must be betrayed, it was determined by God, and foretold by the Prophets ; yet notwithstanding this Decree, we find that *Judas* acted freely and deliberately ; the Decree of God did not take away the liberty of *Judas's* will in acting, nor yet excuse the Fact he did : The Fact was a very sinful Fact, and *Judas* was damned for it, though it were decreed ; and further we may observe, that God can decree Sin, and so make it, as to the event, necessary, without being the Author of Sin.

*Adam.* Can Liberty and Necessity be in the same Will, a necessity of Acting, and yet freedom in Acting ?

*Ben.* Yes, very well ; for there is a necessity of Immutability without a necessity of Compulsion ; that is, a thing is under such a necessity, as it must unchangeably and certainly be, as it was decreed, and yet the Agents acting must act freely and spontaneously ; and this Necessity, because 'tis also voluntary, can't excuse the Will of the Sinner ; and the Will, because 'tis certainly and unchangeably drawn by suitable means, cannot exclude necessity ; so that the Soul of Man is both bound and free at the same time, 'tis bound by reason of Necessity, but free by reason of Will ; and yet (which is wonderful to consider) 'tis therein guilty wherein it is free, and therein bound wherein it is guilty ; thus it was in the case of *Judas*, his Will was free in betraying

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traying Christ, he acted upon choice, with the full bent of his Will, and therein he was guilty; and yet his Will was bound by the over-ruling hand of God, so as he could not avoid it, nor no other do it in his room: And thus the Will of Man freely chusing Evil, brings God's Will to pass; for it was the Will of God that Christ should dye, and it was no less his soveraign Will that *Judas* should betray him.

*Adam.* Sure you don't think that God hath two Wills, or that he hath commanded one thing, and yet decreed another.

*Ben.* No, God hath not two Wills, but he makes two discoveries of one and the same Will in the Scriptures, viz. by his Precepts, and by Events; by his Precept he told the Jews, *Thou shalt do no Murder*, *Exod. 20. 13.* And yet he makes another discovery of his absolute Will in the Case; for when they slew Christ, it was what his Hand and Counsel had before determined to be done, *Acts 4. 27, 28.* His Precept is, *Thou shalt not bear false Witness*, *Exod. 20. 26.* And yet it was his Soveraign Will that the Evil Spirit should tell *Abab's* Prophets a Lye, that *Abab* might be deceived, *1 Kings 22. 22.* *Thou shalt persuade him and prevail also, Go forth and do so;* by this you may see, that 'tis no errour to say, that God hath commanded one thing and yet decreed another: Yet here is no contradiction in the Will of God to it self; for he makes his Precepts subser-  
 vient to his secret Will in the accomplishment of his own Designs, and herein appears the manifold wisdom of God: If God had not given a Law, which

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Man could not keep, there had been no such thing as Sin in the World, *Because the Law worketh wrath: for where no Law is, there is no transgression*, Rom. 4. 15. If none had broken this Law, the wrath of God upon some, and the mercy of God upon others, could never have been manifested; and God hath given a Law, and actually permitted the breach of that Law, that thereby he may take his rise, to discover both his Mercy and his Justice; and so makes use of the violation of his Law, as a means to execute his own Decrees and Purposes, in glorifying many of his Attributes; but he doth it so as he leaves the Creatures to act according to their own Inclinations in the means of Execution: For in the same evil action perform'd by them, God hath one end, Satan another, and wicked Men another, as in the case of *Job*, *Job* first and second Chapter: Satan's end was to ruine holy *Job* for Time and Eternity if he could. The *Sabeans* end was to enrich themselves with *Job's* Cattle, but God's end was to glorifie himself in the Faith and Patience of his Servant, and to shew forth his Power and Goodness in restoring *Job* again: And so you must always remember this, That what things are done against the revealed Will of God, are not done besides his Will; but this is no excuse to the Creature in sinning, because it acts according to its own Inclinations, and so it acts very freely.

*Adam.* You have spoken very largely about Election, Reprobation, God's Decrees, the Necessity and Liberty of Man's Will; but don't you differ from us in some other points of Doctrine?

*Ben.* Yes, I doubt we differ in other things as well these, but the foundation of our Differences lieth here; but since you are free, I pray tell me what you think of Original Sin, and of such as dye before they have committed any actual sin?

*Adam.* I believe that all Men are born in Sin, but I think that this Original Sin is taken away by Baptism, and so every Infant that is baptized, dying in Infancy, must be saved; because if its Original Sin be taken away it becomes innocent.

*Ben.* There are three things very clear in this case; *First*, That Infants have Original Sin, *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my Mother conceive me*, Psal. 51. 5. And a good Tree bringeth forth good Fruit, Mat. 7. 17. But Infants bring forth bad Fruit; first they bring forth Pride, Rebellion, Lying, and suchlike, by which it appears they have a bad Nature, which they bring into the World with them, which Nature lays them under Condemnation; for he is a Sinner who wants what the Law requires, as well as he who wants what the Law forbids: Meer Innocency, if they had it, could not save them; for a Stone and a Beast are innocent, but they must have Justice, for the Law requires Justice in our natural Dispositions, as well as our natural Actions; there must be Truth in the inward parts, and a moral fitness to perform perfect and perpetual Obedience, Gal. 3. 10. *Secondly*, They have not only a depraved Nature communicated unto them from the Loins of our first Parent *Adam*; but *Adam's* personal Guilt was imputed to

all his Posterity, and that alone brought Death and Condemnation upon the whole World of Mankind which were in his Loins when he fell, and the communication of *Adam's* weakness and corruption to his Posterity, is founded upon the imputation of his personal guilt to them; for if that guilt of his had not been imputed to his Posterity, they could not have been made Sinners, and condemned by his fall, for they had no personal Guilt of their own before they had a personal Existence; yet the Scripture tells us, by one Man Sin entred into the world, and Death by Sin, and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned, *viz.* in one Man: And because his Sin is imputed to the whole kind, God in Justice denies the Children of *Adam* his Image, and leaves them to that pravity and weakness of Nature which his personal Transgression deserved: Now Death came upon Infants, that had not sinned actually after the Similitude of *Adam's* Transgression, *Rom. 5. 12, 14.* And if *Adam's* Sin had not been Charged upon them, they could not in Justice have dy'd for it; Nay, if Infants had no Sin, they could not dye at all; but they dye, therefore they have Sin, *viz.* Sin Imputed, together with a Sinful Nature communicated to them, from the Loins of their Parents. Thirdly, these Infants that are saved, must have the Imputation of *Adam's* personal Guilt, and the Defilement of his Nature, taken away from them, by the Imputation of Christ's Justice and Righteousness unto them; and also the purchased Graces of the Holy Ghost, to purifie their Natures, and fit them for glory: They must be washed in the Laver of Christ's Blood and Spirit; *For the Blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all Sin, 1 John 1. 8.*

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Baptism can't do that, neither can any Duty do it. If Baptism washes away Sin, then Baptism is a Saviour, and we have another Saviour besides Christ: But Baptism is not the putting away the filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, 1 Pet. 3. 21. You grossly abuse that place, *John* 3. 5. *Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God: The Water here is not the Water in Baptism, but Water and Spirit are of the same Signification in this place, and signify as much as Spiritual Water, or Sanctifying Grace; As the Holy Ghost and Fire in Mat. 3. 11. signify the same Thing.*

*Adam.* Whatever that Text signifies, I can't believe that *Adam's* personal Guilt is imputed to any of his Posterity, we are never the worse for *Adam's* personal Sin; for the Scripture tells us, *The Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father; And in those Days, they shall say no more; The Fathers have eaten a sowre Grape, and the Childrens Teeth are set on edge, Ezek. 18. 20. Jer. 31. 29.*

*Ben.* Whereas 'tis said, *The Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father;* this passage has no Reference at all to our first Parents, but only to our Immediate Parents, and I believe none are punished everlastingly for the sins of immediate Parents; but Fathers and Sons are equally involved in the Guilt of *Adam's* personal Transgression, and we are all labouring under the Miseries that *Adam's* sin brought upon him and us, *Gen. 3. 16, 17, 18.* And that other Text, *Jer. 31. 29. The Fathers have eaten a sowre Grape, &c.* is to be understood of immediate



Parents, as the term [ *Fathers* ] in the plural Number notes; And the meaning is, that towards the End of Time, when God shall bring the seed of *Abraham* to himself, and so under the Influences of New Covenant Grace, then that old Covenant Threatning, of God's *visiting the sins of the Fathers upon their Children*, shall be taken away from the Jews, as appears by the 31st and 32d Verses.

*Adam.* You speak as if our Nature were so tainted and corrupted by Sin, that we have no power to keep the Law, nor contribute to our own Happiness.

*Ben.* When we came out of God's hand in the Day of our Creation, our Nature was fitted to keep the whole Law, but as soon as ever we fell, we lost all our saving knowledge of God, all our Rectitude of Will, and Goodness of Affection; *We are all gone aside, and altogether become filthy; There is none that doeth good, no not one*, Psal. 14. 3. The Prayer of the wicked is Sin; and the plowing of the wicked is sin, Psal. 109. 7. Pro. 21. 4. Neither can we set one step towards our own Conversion; We can't so much as think a good Thought, 2 Cor. 3. 5. Not that we are insufficient of our selves to think any thing of our selves. Nor we can't speak a good word; *The Preparations of the Heart in Man*

and the Answer of the Tongue, is from the Lord, Pro. 16. 1. We can't will to do a good Action, Phil. 2. 13. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good Pleasure. Nor we can't begin a good work, continue it, nor finish it, Heb. 12. 2. Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith: We stand in need of the preventing, concomitant, and subsequent Assistances of Divine Grace, and of an Efficient continually to move us; for nothing can move it self; all created Beings act by the Immediate Influx of Divine Power.

*Adam.* If Men have no power to obey the Law of God, why have we so many Exhortations in Scripture to all Acts of Obedience, are those Exhortations in vain?

*Ben.* No, they are not in vain; for God Designs to bring three things about by those Exhortations; First, he gives a Law to the Reprobate, that by the breach of it they may justly endure punishment, and that their Damnation may be an Act of Justice, as their Reprobation was an Act of Sovereignty; For the Letter, that is the Law, as a Covenant of works, killeth, 2 Cor. 3. 6. And therefore the Law is called, the Ministration of Condemnation, verse 9. And 'tis given to set forth the Glory of God's Justice on them that perish; And

And though fallen Man hath lost all his Dispositions to obey, the Law hath not lost any of its Power to command. Secondly, He gave a Law, that Christ might fulfill this Law for all the Elect, and that he might obtain glory and honour in our Nature, *Isai. 50. 5, 6. The Lord God hath opened mine Ear, and I was not Rebellious, neither turned away back; I gave my Back to the Smilers, and my Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair, &c.* Thirdly, God gave a Law to be a Measure and Rule of the Actions of the New Creature, or Man regenerated; not intending to justify us by our Obedience, but to manifest his Power in conforming our Hearts to love this Law; and this Conformity is wrought gradually in the Hearts of the Sanctify'd; They go from strength to strength: *I will put my Laws into their Hearts, and in their minds will I write them, Heb. 10. 16.* So when Believers are exhorted to watch and pray, and take heed; and *work out their own Salvation with fear and trembling, &c.* it is to shew them the Sovereignty of God over them, and their Duty towards him, as a Father: And God makes use of these Exhortations to stir up Believers, and quicken them in their work, he applying these written Exhortations by his Spirit, and blessing them unto this End: So Believers may be said to work out their own Salvation

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when they make it appear to others, by their working, that they are sanctified and saved ones.

*Adam.* I don't think, that Men can be justified without good works; for, doth not the Scripture say, That *we are justified by believing*, Rom. 5. 1. And that *Rahab the Harlot* was justify'd by works, *James* 5. 25?

*Ben.* I will shew you in a few words what Justification is not, and likewise what it is. Justification is not the infusing of Justice into our Souls, or giving us the Habits of Grace; but it is a pronouncing a Person Just, upon finding him so by Tryal and Judgment. Now an Elect Person is found Just, by the imputation of Christ's Justice to him: This Imputation consists in God's reckoning and accounting the active and passive Obedience of Christ to the Elect, as if they themselves had perform'd and suffer'd in their own Persons; *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth Righteousness without Works*, Rom. 4. 6. that is to say, without any Works of his own performing. Indeed tis said, that *Abraham* believ'd God, and it was counted unto him for Righteousness, but it was not the Act of believing, but the



the Object he believ'd in, viz. Christ's Obedience, that was counted unto him for Righteousness before God, tho' his Faith might be accounted unto him for Righteousness before Men; and by his Works his Faith was made perfect, that is, perfectly manifested to others; and so he was call'd the *Friend of God*, Jam. 2. 22, 23. And when we are said to be *justified by Faith*, as Rom. 5. 1. the meaning is, that we are justified by Christ's Righteousness and Merits, apprehended by Faith: Christ's Justice justifies us before God, and good Works justifies us before men; so we may easily reconcile the Apostle Paul, Rom. 5. 9. being now *justified by his Blood*, to the Apostle James, in the place you mention'd; the one speaks of Justification before GOD, the other speaks of Justification before Men. Faith it self can't be the Condition of the New Covenant, no more than the Effect can be the Condition of the Cause; for the New Covenant gives Faith, Matt. 12. 21. *And in his Name shall the Gentiles trust.*

*Adam.* You speak all this while as if Redemption were wrought out only for some particular Persons, whereas the Scripture tells us, that Christ died *for the Sins of the whole World*, 1 John 2. 2. *And tasted Death for every*

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every Man, Hebr. 2. 9. That he gave himself a Ransom for all, and will have all Men to be saved, 1 Tim. 2. 4, 6. And suchlike Expressions are often used.

*Ben.* Those that catch hold of small words without comparing one place of Scripture with another, do but lose themselves and the Truth in searching; for there are several [Alls] and [Wholes] mention'd in the Scripture: The word [All] doth not signifie every individual Person in the World in those places, but some of all sorts and kinds of Men, some *Jews* and some *Gentiles*; not every Individual, but some of every Species: And the Reason why the Apostle uses this term, was, because the *Jews* had a fond Conceit that the *Messiah* should extend his Benefits to no Nation or People but themselves, and such as joyn'd with them. The Apostles themselves contended with *Peter*, for going to the *Gentiles*, *Acts* 1. 1, 2. And as for those terms, we find them us'd often in a restrain'd sense; as *John* 3. 26. 'tis said, that [all] Men came to Christ, and yet we know but few (compar'd with the whole World) came to Christ. And so in 1 *John* 5. 19. The whole World lieth in Wickedness; but there all the godly are excepted, as appears by the former

mer part of the Verse, *We know that we are of God.* But, to make the Dispute short, Do you believe that God had a certain Fore-sight and Fore-knowledge of those that should be sav'd before Christ died?

*Adam.* Truly I can't tell how to deny this, for the Scripture saith, *Known unto God are all his Works from the beginning of the World,* *Acts* 15. 18. And to deny this, were to suppose Infinite Wisdom ignorant.

*Ben.* Then you have given away your Tenet of Universal Redemption, and you have done it very handsomly too, for you have brought to my mind some part of the Context, *Acts* 15. 14. *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a People for his Name; and this was done according to his knowledge of all things.* Now if God [took out a People] from the *Gentiles*, then he did not take [all] the *Gentiles*; and if this taking out were according to his Fore-knowledge of all Events, then he never intended to take the [whole] of the *Gentiles*, unless he foreknew one thing, and intended another but as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, *Isa.* 14. 24. And if you say, that God purposed to give Christ for all that would be

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lieve in him, and repent of their Sins, so long as you acknowledge the certain Foreknowledge of God in all cases, this will not help you in the least; for if that were true, that God design'd to give Christ a *Ransom for all that would truly believe and repent*, you must acknowledge withal, that he certainly fore-knew that the greatest part would not do these things; and if he certainly knew that the greatest part would not, then he never intended this Redemption for them; and if he never intended to redeem all, where is your Universal Redemption? You have granted a certain Foresight to the Almighty, in all Cases, and so in this: Now this Foresight of his was Constitutive of the Event, or else God might have been mistaken, and have foreseen the Thing that should never be. Thus, you see, you must either hold, that the most High is ignorant of Future Events, or you must quit your Notion of Universal Redemption in God's Intention, according to your own Principles.

*Adam.* Did not Christ lament the Case of Jerusalem, and say, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as an Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not, Mat. 23. 37?

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*And when he was come near, he beheld the City, and wept over it, Luke 19. 41.*

*Ben.* Here you must know, in the first place, that Christ's Tears were but Prophetic Tears; for if they had been Tears of Mediatorial Love, he would then have cured their unbelief, (he was able to have done it) and not have said, as verse 42, *But now they are hid from thine Eyes*: So those Tears of his did only Presage the mournful Condition that Nation should be brought into, by the Roman Power; even as *Isaiah* walked naked and barefoot three years, for a Sign and wonder upon *Egypt* and *Ethiopia*, to prefigure their Calamity, *Isai.* 20. 3, 4. So the Prophet *Elisha* wept before *Hazael*, to foreshew the Cruelty that *Hazael* should exercise upon the *Israelites*; *And the Man of God wept*; *And Hazael said, why weepeth my Lord?* *And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the Children of Israel,* 1 *Kings* 8. 11, 12. But Christ's Tears could not be shed upon the account of their rejecting him, and perishing in their Iniquity, as many foolishly imagine; for then Christ had wept hypocritically, if he had wept for the Damnation of those whom he never intended to save, and for the Loss of those that were never given him: for *they were none of his sheep,* *John* 10. 26. And whereas he saith,

faith, *How often would I have gathered thy Children, &c.* this was but the Language of the Law, or Covenant of Works, which can never give Life to fallen Man; 'Tis as much as to say, I would, according to that old-Covenant-Promise, *Isa. 1. 19. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land,* which Language was Conditionally true; but they could not [*Will*] there was their Misery: He did not tell them, *I will, and you shall,* that is the Language of the Gospel Covenant, *Jer. 31. 33.* And if you could distinguish between Law and Gospel, you would not run into such Errors as Universal Redemption and its evil Consequences.

*Adam.* I can't see but that the whole World of Mankind were as truly in *Adam* when the Promise was given to him, *Gen. 3. 15.* as when God made the Covenant of works with him, *Gen. 2. 16, 17.* And if so, I can't tell why the Plaister should not be as broad as the Sore; Jesus Christ is an Universal Physician, but if his Patients will not follow his Directions, so long as they are Rational Creatures, they must go without a Cure.

*Ben.* Truly you can see but little, if you think that the great Promise of the New Covenant is given through the Head of the Old

Covenant; *Adam* was a publick person, and common head to his Posterity under the Covenant of Works, but when *Adam* fell, he lost his Headship, for that was a part of his Honour, and as soon as he lost his Holiness, he lost his Honour: Now though we fell in *Adam*, we can't rise in him; therefore the Scripture hath told us of two *Adams*, 1 Cor. 15. 44. *The first Man Adam has made a living Soul, the last Adam was made a quickning Spirit*: These two *Adams* are two publick Persons, or common Heads, through whom God deals with all the Children of Men; and as they are two common Heads, so they have two Seeds; all Mankind are the Seed of the first *Adam*, and they by Nature are earthy, *The first Man is of the Earth earthy*; and as is the earthy, such are they that are earthy. The first *Adam's* Children are like their Father: All the Elect are the seed of the Second *Adam*, and they by Grace shall be made spiritual and holy, in Body and Soul; *He shall see his seed*, (viz. brought home to himself, and made like himself) *and so he shall be satisfy'd*, Isaia 53. 10, 11. The Second Man is the Lord from Heaven; and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are Heavenly, 1 Cor. 15. 47, 48. And thus, as all Mankind dy'd in the first *Adam*; so all the Elect are rais'd to Life by virtue of Union with the Second, 1 Cor. 15. 22. For

as there are two *Adams*, so there are two  
 [ *alls* ] belonging to those two *Adams*: And  
 though the whole World were in the first  
*Adam*, when the Promise was given him, yet  
 they were in him only as a Natural Parent,  
 not as a publick Person and common Head,  
 for the New Covenant had a New Head, *viz.*  
 Jesus Christ, *For all the promises of God, in him*  
*are yea, and in him Amen,* 2 Cor. 1. 20. The  
 New-Covenant-promise was not given to  
 Mankind through *Adam*, as the old Covenant  
 was; but this Promise was given through  
 Jesus Christ, the Head of the New Covenant,  
 to *Adam* himself, as one of the Elect, one of  
 Christ's Seed; and herein *Adam* was consider-  
 ed only as a private and single Person: The  
 Promise was not given to the Seed of *Adam*,  
 as such, but to the Elect as the Seed of Christ:  
 And yet the Plaister is as broad as the Sore,  
 with respect to Sins, though not with respect  
 to the Number of Sinners; Yea, *where Sin a-*  
*bounded, Grace did much more abound,* Rom. 5.  
 20. For the Elect are justify'd by a higher  
 Righteousness than the Righteousness of the  
 first *Adam*, even by the Righteousness of him  
 that is God-Man, Rom. 10. 3. called *God's*  
*Righteousness*. And they are glorify'd by a  
 higher glory than Paradise-glory was; They  
 enjoy God in their own Nature joyned to the  
 second Person, and see him as he is, was, and



ever will be to them, in a Mediator, 1 *John* 3. 2. And this *Adam* in Innocency could not do. Indeed the Blood of Christ would have been sufficient for all Mankind, if God had intended it for all; but because he intended it for some only, the vertue of it is limited by that Intention, and it becomes Insufficient for the whole World; but it is sufficient for all those that God design'd it for: Christ did not pray for all, *I pray for them, I pray not for the world,* *John* 17. 9. *but for them which thou hast given me.* If Christ did not pray for all, he did not bleed for all; And he told the *Jews*, That they *believed not*, because they were *not of his sheep*, *John* 10. 26. And whereas you say, Christ's Patients are Rational Creatures, and if they will not follow his Directions they must go without a Cure, how foolishly you talk! I pray is not the Devil a rational Creature, and yet his Reason, though very sharp and strong, hath no Influence upon his Will, to cause him to love God, and chuse Jesus Christ, because his Reason is depraved and corrupted by his Fall: So it is with the the Sons of Men, their Reason is defiled, and can have no Influence upon their Wills, to cause them to believe in Jesus Christ and love him: Though they have Natural Reason, yet they are Mad-men; for, I pray, who but Mad-men would say unto God, the Fountain

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of all good, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways?* Job 21. 14. And therefore Christ deals with his Elect, when he calls them to himself, as with persons besides themselves; he binds them with the Cords of Love, *their time is a time of Love*, Ezek. 16. 8. And he purges their heads and hearts, composeth and setteth them, by speaking peace and pardon to their Souls, by enabling them to believe his Promises, *Purifying their Hearts by Faith*, Acts 15. 9. And every prodigal Sinner must be so dealt with, before he can come to Jesus Christ: The Prodigal was brought to himself before he could come to his Father, Luk. 15. 17. And Christ hath engaged himself, to bring in all his Elect; though they have no will, he will make them willing; *Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my Voice*, John 10. 16.

*Adam.* There is one Text yet, that I believe none of you all can reconcile to your Doctrine of Particular Redemption, and that is *John 3. 16. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Now if by [*the World*] you understand [*the Elect World*] it will hence follow, that some of the Elect World may not believe, and so perish; because

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'tis said [*whosoever*] that is, whosoever of the Elect.

*Ben.* You are mistaken, we can easily reconcile this Text to our Doctrine of Particular Redemption; for by the [*World*] we are not bound to understand the Elect World in this place, but the Human World, in a way of distinction from the World of Angels, for whom Christ did not die; and we believe that whosoever of the Humane World believeth on him, shall not perish; but none of the Humane World can believe truly but such as were elected, and they shall, if they live to be capable of an Act of Faith; *For as many as were ordained to Eternal Life believed, Acts 13. 48. The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded, Rom. 11. 7.*

*Adam.* What! shall we condemn all the Heathen World then, when a great part of them never had the Gospel, and so no Means to beget Faith?

*Ben.* This is well thought of, for some of your great Doctors have of late pleaded earnestly for the Salvation of Unbelieving Heathens; and some of your Side would fain perswade us to believe, that all Nations have

have heard the sound of the Gospel; but we know to the contrary, for many Nations both in *Africa* and *America* know nothing of CHRIST at this day: And that Passage, *Rom. 10. 18. Their Sound went into all the Earth, and their Words unto the Ends of the World,* is to be understood of the World, collectively consider'd, of all the Species or Kinds of Men in the World, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as the Context manifests, Verses 19, 20. The *American* World was not then found out, that we know of, and therefore the Apostles could not go to them. Where Christ hath a People to gather, he will send the Word of the Gospel, to beget Faith in his Blood, as he did to *Corinth*, because he had much People in that City, *Acts 18. 10.* But where God hath none to convert, he will hardly send his Gospel; *They assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not, Acts 16. 7.* And if God doth send his Gospel to a place where he hath none to convert, 'tis in Judgment, not in Mercy, and 'tis but to discover the Enmity of Mankind against it: Thus he sent his Word to the Reprobate *Israelites*, *Isa. 6. 9, 10. And he said, Go and tell this People, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not: Make the Heart of this People fat, and make their*



*their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes: lest they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the Cities be wasted, without Inhabitant, and the Houses without Man, &c.* By which we may see, that the Lord had a design to destroy them, and so his Word was sent to them in anger, without a sanctifying Blessing accompanying it: Without the Word of the Gospel, there can be no Faith in Christ begotten; *For how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard?* Rom. 10. 14. The Gentiles, while they liv'd without the Word of the Gospel, were without Christ, Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, *having no Hope, and without God in the World,* Ephes. 2. 11, 12. And such, we are sure, must be damp'd, except a Man may enter into Heaven without being born again, which thing Christ himself denies, *John 3. 3.* Thus your Doctrine destroys the Work of Sanctification, by denying the Necessity thereof. As for Infants, they are not capable of being taught, and therefore the Lord may sanctifie them another way, such of them as are saved, *viz.* by secretly infusing the sanctifying Graces of his Spirit into their Hearts, and there-

by

by habitually preparing them, and making them meet to enter into the Inheritance of the Saints in Light: But for the Elect that live to adult years, it is certain that they have a Renovation wrought in their Minds by the Word of the Gospel, that they may *shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, 1 Pet. 2. 9.* Yet every one that hath the Word of the Gospel is not so call'd, for some *stumble at the Word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed, 1 Pet. 2. 8.* 'Tis for the Elects sake that the Gospel is preach'd, and it works effectually upon none else; though 'tis the Duty of the Ministers of Jesus Christ to speak to all in their Auditories and Congregations, because they know not who are elected, and who not, till Faith manifests it on one hand, and final Unbelief on the other: The Lord only knoweth who are his; but in a great House, or in a great Congregation, *there are not only Vessels of Gold, and of Silver, but also of Wood, and of Earth, 2 Tim. 2. 9, 20.* Neither do the Ministers of Christ proclaim a false thing, by making such a general report, though but few be the better for it; for though in a general way they *degrade Christ to all; yet they promise Heaven to none but those that are enabled to take hold*

hold of Christ by Faith, and the Elect only can do this; the rest are still left in their Native blindness, and desire not to be delivered from it.

*Adam.* But don't you think, that some that are the Elect of God, and true Believers, may fall from grace, as the *Galatians* did, *Gal.* 5. 4. And deny the Lord that bought them, as the false Teachers did, *2 Pet.* 2. 1. And was not *Judas* given to Christ, and yet lost, *John* 17. 12. And don't the Apostle say, *Through thy Knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died,* *1 Cor.* 8. 11.

*Ben.* The *Galatians* grew dark in the Doctrines of Grace, by the subtle Insinuations of false Teachers crept in amongst them, and so may true Believers, for a time, fall from some degrees of Light in the Doctrine of Grace, and from certain degrees of liveliness in the Exercise of Grace, but the Grace of the Doctrine can't totally fall out of them, neither can the Elect be finally deceiv'd, *Mat.* 24. 24. And we believe that Persons may go a great way in the external profession of Religion, and have great Parts and Gifts, and yet fall away, as thou mention'd *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6. but the Apostle told 'em, *ver.* 9, he was persuaded better thing

only of them : And he tells the *Philippians*, that  
 Na- he was confident of this very thing, that he  
 erred which had begun a good work in them would  
 perform it, until the day of the Lord Jesus  
 Christ, Phil. 1. 6. And as for those false  
 Teachers, that are said to deny the Lord that  
 bought them, they were bought only seem-  
 ingly, and in their own and others apprehen-  
 sions ; They were like the *Laodicean Church*,  
 Revel. 3. 17. *They thought themselves rich and*  
*increased with goods, and yet were miserable,*  
*blind and naked :* And so that Text also,  
 Ezekel. 18. 24. is to be understood. As for  
 Judas, though he was given to Christ for an  
 Apostle, yet he was never given him for a  
 Member of his Mystical body ; for Christ gave  
 him up to Satan, and forsook him, therefore  
 he was no part of his Body ; For *no Man ever*  
*yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and che-*  
*risheth it, even as the Lord the Church,* Ephes.  
 5. 29. For we are Members of his body, of  
 his flesh, and of his Bones. Christ prayed  
 for Peter, that his Faith might not fail, that  
 it should not totally fail, Luke 22. 32. but he never  
 prayed for Judas, but delivered him up to  
 Satan, Psal. 109. 6. *Let Satan stand at his right*  
*hand.* And whereas the Apostle says, *Through*  
*thy Knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for*  
*whom Christ dyed ;* this is not to be understood  
 of a Perishing Everlastingly, for so the Elect  
 can't



can't perish: And I think there is no great Difficulty in this Text, if we will but allow the Apostle to be his own Interpreter; for he tells us what he means by this word *[perish]* in the very next Verses; *But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak Conscience, ye sin against Christ; Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, &c.* So the meaning is no more than this; If you that are strong lay stumbling-blocks in the way of weak Brethren, you will draw them by your example to sin against their own Consciences, and so wound their Spirits, and kill their Joys, and make their present Comforts perish: But 'tis one thing for a Man's Comforts to perish by the wounds of Conscience, and another thing for his Soul to perish: *David saith, Unless thy Law had been my delight, I should then have perished in mine affliction, Psalm 119. 92.* His meaning is, that if he had not taken comfort in God's Word, his Comforts must all have perished, but he knew his Soul could not perish; for he says in the 94th verse, *I am thine, save me. Thou art my Portion, O Lord, verse 57;* and he that hath God for his Portion can't perish.

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*Adam.* But there are some other places of Scripture which speak very plainly of a Possibility of falling from Grace, as 1 Cor. 9. 27. *Lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I my self should be a Cast-away*; And *Moses* desired to be blotted out of the Book that God had written, to save *Israel*, *Exod.* 32. 32. And *Christ* saith, *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white Rayment, and I will not blot out his Name out of the Book of Life*, *Rev.* 3. 5. By which we may conclude, that some Believers may be Cast-aways, and have their Names blotted out of the Book of Life.

*Ben.* You are too hasty in concluding, your Promises will not afford such a Conclusion; For in the first place, when the Apostle says, *Lest I should become a Cast-away*, the meaning is, lest I should incur the Censure of the Saints, and be cast out of their Communion: And in that sense he said, he *could wish that himself were accursed from Christ, for his Brethrens sake*, *Rom.* 9. 3. He could have been willing to have been cast out of the Church, to have brought them in. And when *Moses* desired, in the grief of his Spirit, to be blotted out of the Book God had written, unless God would forgive *Israel's Sin*, we can't suppose that *Moses* desired to be blotted out of the Book of Election and Life-eternal, no Man in

his wits can desire that ; but it was the Book of Life-natural, and *Moses* could have been willing to have dy'd, if that might have prevented God's Judgments coming upon the *Israelites*. And where Christ saith, *I will not blot out his name out of the book of Life*, the meaning is, his Name shall not be blotted out from amongst the Faithful, but they shall acknowledge him on Earth, and *I will acknowledge him at the last Day before my Father*: But on the other hand, a person is said to have his part taken out of the Book of Life, *Revel. 22. 19*. When he has made a profession of Religion, and so seemed to others to have a part in the book of Election, and a Right to Church-membership, and afterwards fall into scandalous Sins, and depart from his profession, then God takes away from him that which he appeared or seemed to have, according to that of our Saviour, *Mat. 25. 29. From him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath*; that is, the things which he seemeth to have: So God takes away a Man's part out of the Book of Life, when he declares him to have no part in it: But that the Elect shall finally persevere to the End of their Days, I shall offer but two things to prove it; First, God's Covenant, *Fer. 32. 40. I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me*. Secondly, Christ's

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Christ's Word and Engagement to all his,  
*John 10. 28. I give unto them Eternal Life, and  
 they shall never perish, neither shall any Man pluck  
 them out of my hand.*

*Adam.* 'Tis time to leave Doctrinal points,  
 and come to the fourth Head; and let me hear  
 what you have against our Church-Conversa-  
 tion, but I pray be very short, for I begin to  
 be cold.

*Ben.* Your Church-Conversation is such as,  
 I think, I may truly say, your Spot is not the  
 Spot of God's People; I am not willing to  
 bring Railing Accusations against the worst  
 of Men, but I shall soberly try both your  
 Teachers and People, by the Rule of God's  
 word. First, for your Teachers, the Apo-  
 stle says, *1 Tim. 3. 2, 3, &c. A Bishop or Pastor  
 must first be blameless;* but your Teachers have  
 many things in them worthy of blame, as you  
 have heard already. Secondly, Ministers ought  
 to be vigilant, but yours are very slothful,  
 in looking after the good of Souls. Thirdly,  
 Sober; but there are many of them very in-  
 temperate and sensual. Fourthly, Given to  
 Hospitality; but which of the Saints do they  
 entertain? and yet many of them are very  
 rich in the World. Fifthly, Apt to teach,  
 but they are commonly so Ignorant, that if



a poor distressed Conscience go to them for Relief, they can't tell what to say to it in a Gospel way; and a person may be a great while in their Company before one shall hear them speak a Savory word. Sixthly, Not given to Wine; but, I doubt, many of them will drink more than for their health sake, and their bodily Infirmities; And many of them are much given to Hunting, Carding, Games and Sports of divers sorts; and what abundance of precious time do they mispend in idle Talk, and unnecessary Visits, only to gratify the desires of the Flesh? Seventhly, Not greedy of filthy Lucre; but they hunt after Pluralities and great Livings, and will contend even with their own Brethren about a fat Benefice. Eighthly, Not a Brawler; but how common a thing is it for them to wrangle with their own People, and Neighbours, about meer Trifles! Ninthly, not a Novice, but many of them are very weak in the Notions of Divinity. Tenthly, He must have a good Report of them that are without; but they are so far from that, as very few of their own Hearers will give them a good word. And what if some of them be a little more restrained than others? a Lion is a Lion, though he be in Chains: And though some few of them study much, if their Studies be employed chiefly in Humane Affairs, this can't

can't profit the Souls of their People, though  
 the Occasional Study of those things is lawful  
 and useful. In the next place, their Successes  
 are as small as their Qualifications; For when  
 they have preached to a People twenty or  
 thirty years, where is there a Soul that can  
 say upon sound Experience, This Man was  
 made an Instrument in God's hand, to turn  
 me from Darkness to Light, to make me see  
 my Sin, to love Christ, believe in him, and  
 truly leave my wicked ways and sinful  
 Courses? Where is there a Man amongst your  
 Teachers, that can say with the Prophet *Esay*,  
*Behold, I and the Children whom the Lord hath*  
*given me?* *Isai.* 8. 18. Surely, that of the  
 Prophet may be applied unto such Teachers,  
*I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore*  
*they shall not profit this People at all, saith the*  
*Lord,* *Jer.* 23. 32. In the next place, let us  
 not come to your People, and see if the blind don't  
 follow the blind; What a Numerous swarm  
 of Atheists, Deists, Naturalists, blind super-  
 stitious Zealots, and Common Debauchees,  
 make Sanctuary within your Walls? 'Tis a very  
 rare thing to find a Man of honest conscientious  
 Principles and Practices amongst you at  
 this Day, and if there be such an one any where  
 to be found, his Brethren will laugh at him,  
 count him a Fool, and call him a Phanatick;  
 Thus you make the Souls of the Righteous  
 Sad.

Sad. How few of you mind any thing of Closet or Family Duty! Where shall a Man find three or four of your Society met together to pray, and hold some edifying Conference one with another, about Soul-matters? Yet we read, *That they that feared the Lord spake often one to another*, Mal. 3. 16. 'Tis a common thing to find your People idle in the Streets, flouting and jeering at sober godly Men as they pass along; And you may be found quarrelling at Alehouses, backbiting and persecuting the Godly with your Tongues: And if it were more tolerable to hold Communion with you than it is, for my part, I could never joyn with you, because of your persecuting Spirit, and Enmity against those that Dissent from you.

*Adam.* Then it seems you don't allow of laying any Restraint upon Conscience in matters of Religion; but I think 'tis a very useful thing, to prevent Sects and Schisms.

*Ben.* I am sure the Apostle counted it a work of the flesh, Gal. 4. 29. *He that was born after the Flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit*: And whatsoever was done under the Old Testament upon this account, the Case is altered now, by our Lord Jesus Christ who would not have Men persecuted for an

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Erring Conscience, much less for a Discern-  
 ing one ; for he permitted the Wheat and the  
 Tares to grow together in the Civil state, the  
 Field of the World, until the time of Harvest,  
*Mat. 13. 29, 38.* Men are not to be compelled  
 by force of Arms, but by force of Arguments,  
 in matters of Conscience.

*Adam.* Whatever the Will of Christ is in  
 that Case, I am sure we are told, That the  
 Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses Seat ; there-  
 fore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe  
 and do, *Mat. 23. 2, 3.* And we read of some,  
 that creep into Houses, and lead captive silly Wo-  
 men, *2 Tim. 3. 6.*

*Ben.* Now you think you have done it at  
 last ; but as touching the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*  
 sitting in *Moses's* Seat, that is, were Tea-  
 chers of the Law of *Moses*, Christ did not  
 thereby bind his Disciples to hear them, for  
 when he and his Apostles must have preached  
 to the Walls ; and he bids them beware of the  
 Heaven of the Pharisees, that is, their Doctrine,  
*Mat. 16. 6, 12.* yet he would not have them,  
 despise the Authority of the Law of *Moses*,  
 but observe the Law which they read in the  
 Synagogues ; for though they were corrupt,  
 the Law was holy : Besides, the *Scribes* and  
*Pharisees* were the ordinary Interpreters of  
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the Law, and there was no True Church in being, but the Church of *Israel*, at that time; and Christ and his Disciples were Members of that Church; and those Teachers were lawfully call'd, and the Church they belong'd to was of God's own institution: But it hath been prov'd, that your Church is of human institution; and the *Pharisees* fate in *Moses's* Seat, it will hardly be prov'd that your Teachers sit in *Christ's* Seat, or imitate him to the life in any thing. And whereas you think the *Dissenters* are those that creep into Houses and lead captive silly Women, it doth evidently appear that there is nothing of it in the Practice of the Orthodox Dissenters; for they are not asham'd to be as publick as any other, both in Preaching and Writing. But the Apostle speaks of such Persons as are asham'd of their Doctrin, and so seek to vent the Poyson of it in corners; or such as have a *Form of Godliness*, but deny the Power thereof: And so you may take it to your self, if you please.

*Adam.* You have brought a great deal of Scripture for your Opinions, but are you sure the Scripture is God's Word?

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*Ben.* I am sorry that Men that pretend to Religion should have any Tincture of Atheism, to ask such a Question; but it doth appear to be God's Word thus: *First*, By the Majesty of its Stile, it is written in the Name of the Lord. *Secondly*, By the Purity of its Doctrine. *Thirdly*, By the Mysteries reveal'd in it, of the Creation, Redemption, &c. *Fourthly*, By its marvelous Efficacy upon the Consciences of Men. *Fifthly*, By the certain Accomplishment of its Prophecies. *Lastly*, 'Tis either the Word of GOD, of good Angels or good Men; or the Word of evil Angels or wicked Men; 'Tis not the Word of good Angels, nor of good Men; for they durst not contrive a thing to tell Lyes by in the Name of the Lord, to say *He saith*, when he hath not spoken it; neither can it be the Word of evil Angels or evil Men, for they could never contrive such a thing, that tends so much to the Honour of GOD, and the Holiness and Happiness of Men, and to their own Condemnation and Confusion: Therefore it must be the Word of GOD.

*Adam.* I can stay no longer with you; but, for my part, I intend to walk in the way of my Forefathers; for that is the easiest way, and the safest.

*Ben.*

*Ben.* Your Forefathers were either good Men or bad Men; if they were bad Men, 'tis not like they should find out the Truth; if good Men, yet they were not infallible, and so might be deceiv'd in some things, and we must follow them no farther than they follow'd Christ, 1 Cor. 11. 1. And the *Israelites* were commanded thus, *Be ye not as your Fathers*, Zech. 1. 4. If *Abraham* had continued in the way of his Fathers, he had been an Idolater to his dying day; and if the *Jews* (in the second of the *Acts*) had continued in the way of their Fathers, they had never believ'd in Christ; and if *Luther* and the other Reformers had continued in the way of their Fathers, they had died Papists. But if *you* will be filthy still, I can't help it; I pray God change your Heart, and so farewell.

*Tho' Ben and Adam can't agree,  
They do no harm to talk:  
Perhaps by this some Soul may see  
The Way wherein to walk.*



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